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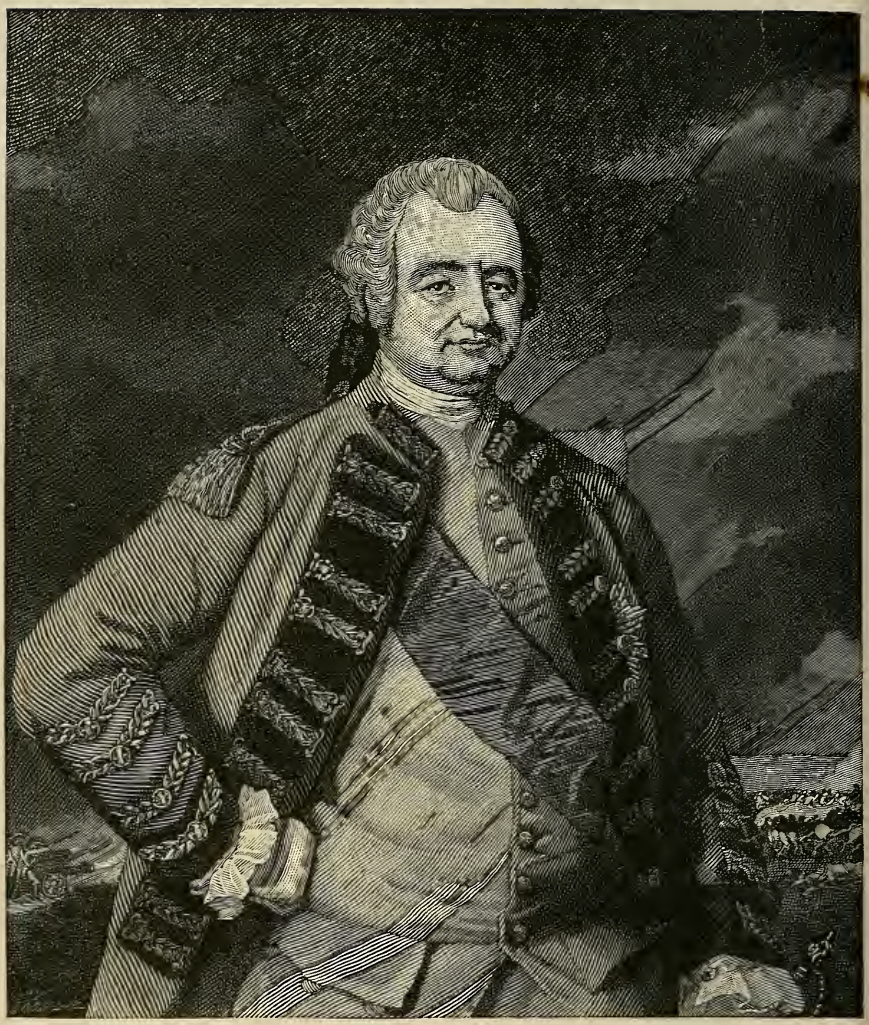

LORD CLIVE

LORD CLIVE

BY

COLONEL SIR CHARLES WILSON

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1890

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INDIA
BERAR
NIZAM
CIRCARS
ORISSA
CANARA
MALABAR
TRAVANCOR
Kuttack
Chicacole
Vizagapatam
Rajahmundry
Masulipatam
Guntoor
Hyderabad
R. Godavery
R. Kistna
Ahmednuggur
Poonah
Tulligaon
Salsette I.
Bombay
Gheriah
SOUTH KONKUN
Sattara
Bejapoor
Kolapoor
Goa
Cape Ramus
Soondah
Honauwar
Coondapoor
Bednore
Cuddapah
Tripetty
Arni
Madras
St. Thomé
Conjeveram
Chingleput
Wandiwash
Vellore
Arcot
Ambour
Cobar
Bangalore
Seringapatam
Mysore
R. Cauvery
Gingi
Fort St. David
Pondicherry
Cuddalore
Devicottah
Mahé
Tellicherry
Calicut
Coimbatoor
Volcondah
Uttatur
Ponany
Trichinopoly
Carical
Nagapatam
Tanjore
Vellum
Madura
Tinnevelly
English Miles
0 50 100 200 300
20°
15°
10°

CABUL
ABDALLI
Candahar
SIKHS
Lahore
R. Sutlej
Roopur
R. Gharra
Buhawulpoor
River Indus
SCINDE
Hydrabad
Tattah
Tropic of Cancer
KUTCH
Bikaneer
JAUTS
RAJPOOT
STATES
Joudpore
Ajmeer
Jeypore
Delhi
R. Jumna
R. Ganges
DOOAB
Koel
Agra
Etaweh
Kanoge
Bulhoor
Kumaon
Almorah
ROHILKUND
Furukabad
Lucknow
Fyzabad
OUDE
Corah
Allahabad
Benares
Ghazeepoor
Buxar
Chunargur
Callinger
R. Chumbul
Khota
TATTAS
Saugur
Ougein
MALWA
Indore
Ahmedabad
Cambay
Baroda
Nagpoor
Sanpoo R.
NEPAL
Katmandoo
Sikkim
BHOTAN
Chuprah
R. Ganges
Patna
Monghir
BEHAR
Saone R.
Kooch Beyhar
R. Brahmaputra
Purniah
Rungpour
Dinagepoor
Rajmahal
Maddah
Moorshedabad
Beerbhoom
Cossimbazar
Plassey
Nadiyah
Dacca
BENGAL
Burdwan
Chinsurah
Chandernagore
Dumdum
Midnapoor
Baj Baj
Calcutta
Falta
Chittagong
Balasore
80
85
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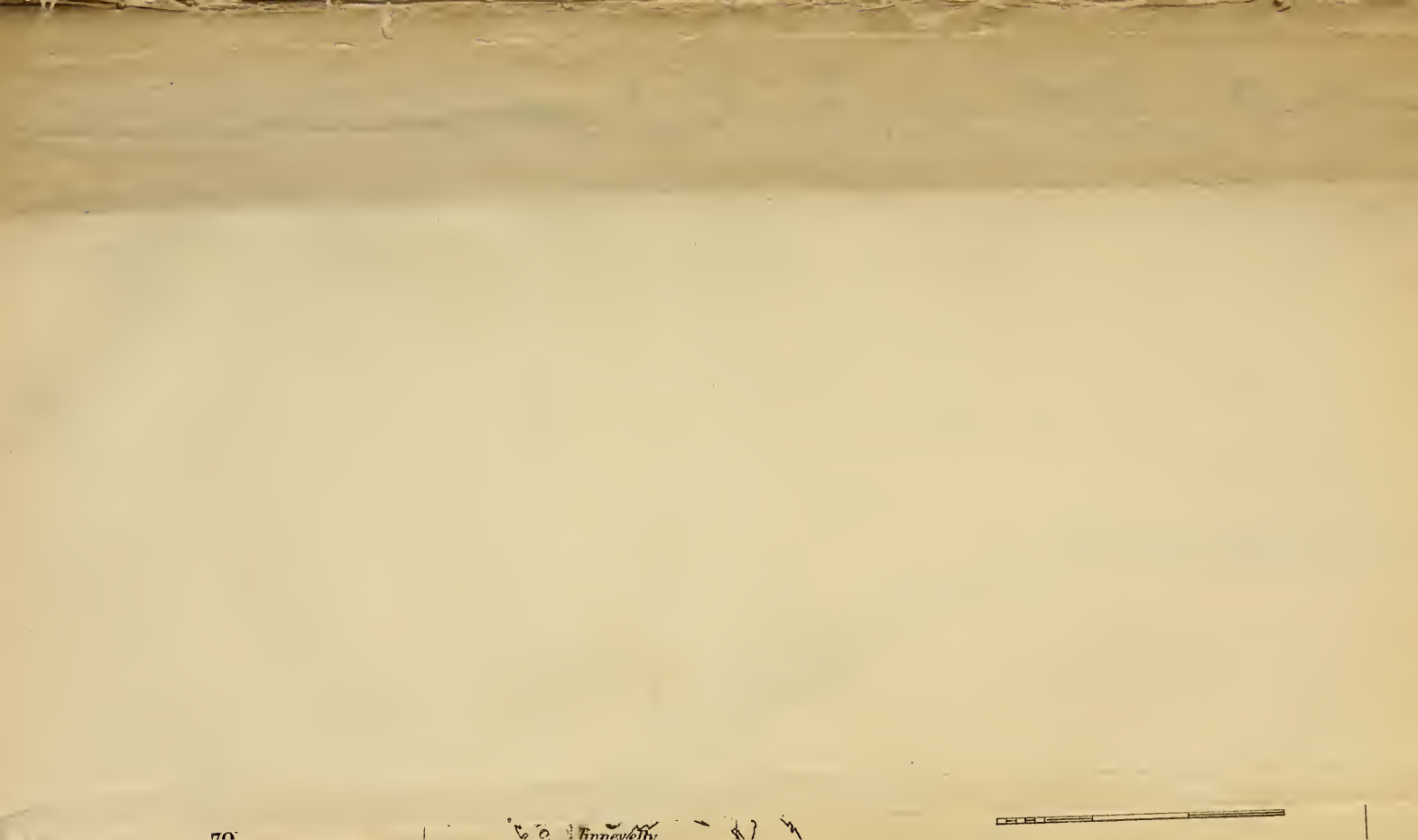

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

When, at the close of the seventeenth century, Aurungzebe was holding court at Delhi, all India was subject to his will. The mass of the people were Hindus, the minority were Moslems. The latter, who represented the ruling power, were of every country of Asia—Afghans, Mongols, Turks, and Hindus who had adopted Islam as their creed. Each successive wave of Moslem conquest left behind it numbers of men who, seduced by a finer climate and easier conditions of existence, settled down and made India their home. These men, coming of a more vigorous stock than the natives, easily rose to positions of responsibility; and, at every local seat of government their descendants claimed, as a right, lucrative employment in the service of the State.

The mighty empire over which the Padishah[1] ruled was divided into *subahs* (provinces), governed by Subadars (viceroys), who were appointed by the Crown, and who were sometimes princes of the blood royal. The Subadar was charged with the general administration of his province. He maintained a large army to crush

[1] The title by which the Mogul Emperors of India were generally known.

the rebellion of a Rajah or curb the ambition of a too powerful Nawab; and he had the right, subject to approval, of filling death vacancies amongst his deputies, the Nawabs. By the side of the Subadar stood two independent officials, the Kadi, who, as in all Moslem countries, administered justice according to the sacred law; and the Diwan (finance minister), appointed by the Crown, who collected the royal share of the revenue, and remitted it to the Imperial Treasury. It was the grant of the *diwani* of Bengal to the East India Company in 1765 which laid the foundation of the British Empire in India. Each province was formed of a varying number of districts, which were entirely subject to the Padishah; and of Native States that, at the time of their conquest, had been left in possession of their Rajahs. The districts were governed by Rajahs or Nawabs, who were appointed by the Crown, or, in the case of a death vacancy, by a Viceroy. Their appointments were not valid until they had been confirmed by royal letter and the insignia of investiture. The Nawabs were summoned to Delhi, kept there, or transferred to other districts, at the will of the Imperial Ministry. In later times they were so frequently changed that a story was current of a newly-appointed Nawab who left Delhi with his face to his elephant's tail, looking out for his successor. The Nawab, assisted by a Kadi and a Diwan, administered his district under the Subadar. He maintained a small army and was obliged to accompany his superior on all military expeditions within the province. The Rajah ruled his hereditary state, subject to the payment of tribute, which was collected by the Subadar or by one of the

Nawabs, and in accordance with the terms of the treaty made at the date of conquest.

In the conquered territories directly administered by the Mogul government the Padishah was the sole proprietor of the soil. He gave lands at will, as revenues for life, to his feudatories, and on their deaths continued them to their heirs or re-granted them to new men. Such grants were called *jagirs*, and they were given to men for distinguished service to the Crown. The feudatory had no power to dispose of his lands; he simply received the Government share of the produce from the *zamindar*, or landowner, who in turn was paid rent by the cultivator, or *ryot*. The *ryot* retained the right of selling or bequeathing his holding, subject to the rent due to the Padishah or to the feudatory. The East India Company held their first settlements at Madras and Calcutta as *zamindars*, and paid rent as such to the Nawabs.

In the collection of the revenue there was the greatest conflict of interests. Each public official tried to squeeze money out of the one next below him. The consequence was that the *ryot* tried to cheat the *zamindar* by keeping back part of his harvest, and the *zamindar* the revenue collector. The Nawab retained part of the revenue of his district, and the Subadar and his Diwan were frequently in collusion to defraud the Imperial Treasury. Few men could resist the temptation to appropriate some of the money that passed through their hands. The system of giving presents was universal; no one could approach a superior or present a petition without making a propitiatory offering. Every one bribed when he had an object to attain, and money could purchase absolution for the foulest crimes.

At the head of the state was the Padishah, whose will was law. He was absolute and irresponsible; exercising power of life and death over his subjects; and there was no check on his actions except the dread of rebellion or assassination. The Mogul sovereigns retained something of the nomadic habits of their ancestors. When the Court was not at Delhi or Lahore they wandered over their Empire with vast armies, which wasted the country as completely as the hordes of Ghenghiz and Timour. The camp of Jahangir, according to Sir Thomas Roe, was twenty miles in circumference. The Padishah and his chief officers had their elephants, their *seraglios*, and their servants; each horseman had his grasscutter and *syce;* and all private soldiers their wives and children. A bazaar, or movable town of shops, followed the camp and ministered to its wants. The whole country was requisitioned and exhausted; and the *ryots* starved whilst the soldiers of the Padishah feasted. Subadars and Nawabs followed the example of their sovereign. The camp of Nasir Jung is said to have contained two hundred thousand fighting men and five hundred thousand followers. The Nawab of Arcot, when paying a visit to the Governor of Madras, travelled with ten elephants, five thousand sepoys, and ten thousand followers, besides horsemen. The native armies, vast as they were, had no real elements of strength. The leaders were inexperienced in modern war, and ignorant of the advantages of discipline. They were not wanting in personal courage, but they were superstitious, strict observers of lucky and unlucky days, and firm believers in omens. If the beasts in their menageries were savage they attacked the enemy, if they

were sullen they sulked in their tents. In battle the officer in command mounted an elephant and became the standard of his army. All eyes were turned towards him; so long as he was visible the troops rallied round him; directly he fell or turned they dispersed, and the day was lost. It was thus possible for a single well-directed shot from a field-piece to decide the fate of a battle. The men were in great part hasty levies from all parts of the country, and had no discipline. The trooper, whose sole property was his horse, hesitated to expose it to artillery fire. The foot-soldier dreaded the enemy's guns, and placed unlimited confidence in his own unwieldy pieces. In the native camps there was neither order nor vigilance. By midnight the soldiers, gorged with rice and stupefied with opiates, were buried in profound slumber, and no precautions were taken to guard against surprise. An army so constituted could scarcely prevail against the serried ranks, the superior discipline, and the greater mobility of European troops. Yet, so great was the *prestige* of the native soldiers that for more than a hundred years the European settlers on the coast acknowledged their superiority. The glory of inaugurating a new era belongs to Paradis, a Swiss officer in the French service, who, on October 24th, 1746, defeated a native army with a single battalion, and showed how weak was the foundation upon which the power of the Padishah rested.

The elements of permanence were wanting in the Mogul Empire. The death of each sovereign was followed by a war for the succession, and there were constant rebellions from within and invasions from without. Patriotism and public spirit were unknown,

and the weak fabric of government was sustained by a complicated system of intrigue and terrorism. The earlier Padishahs had been lax and indifferent in matters of religion. Moslems only in name, they had allowed men of every creed to live in peace, and they had known how to reconcile the discordant elements in the Empire. Aurungzebe, when he came to the throne, abandoned this wise policy for one of intolerance. He employed Moslems in all situations, threw down the temples and prohibited the festivals of the Hindus, and levied a heavy poll-tax on all non-Moslems. The Mahrattas were the first to discern the weakness of the Mogul Empire and the signs of its approaching decline. Whilst professing perpetual obedience and fidelity to Aurungzebe, the "King of the World," they swooped down from their strongholds in the western Ghauts to harry the rich plains of the Deccan. The leader of these wild freebooters was Sivaji, who founded an empire and a dynasty, and established a system of blackmail, known as *chout*, under which the unfortunate *ryot* purchased safety for himself and his crops.

The death of Aurungzebe, in 1707, was followed by a period of disorder, during which sovereign succeeded sovereign in quick succession. The descendants of the Great Mogul became little more than puppets in the hands of their ministers, and, after Nadir Shah had plundered Delhi in 1739, the great Empire which Baber had founded and his successors had raised to such a height of splendour lost all vitality. The supreme power ceased to exercise its due authority in the provinces. The Subadars appointed their own Nawabs;

they gave at best but a half-hearted allegiance to the Crown, and in some instances they established themselves in their vice-royalties as hereditary sovereigns. The Nawabs maintained themselves in their districts in open or covert opposition alike to the Subadar and the throne, and appointed their successors without reference to higher authority. Disputes as to succession naturally arose, and these, with the raids of the Mahrattas, and the intrigues of ambitious men, led to a series of local wars, in which the great trading companies of England and France were, almost perforce, involved. The whole peninsula became one gigantic battlefield, swarming with soldiers and marauding bands. The field of fortune was open to every one, whether of Persia, Arabia, or Turkistan, who had the courage to use his sword or the talents that nature had given him. Every Nawab kept in his pay a band of Pathans—men familiar with assassination, who did not scruple to remove those who were obnoxious to their masters. The Mahrattas founded states which stretched from sea to sea, and extended their devastating incursions to the whole Empire. Always ready to serve the highest bidder, and constantly changing sides, they were equally dreaded by the friends whom they ruined by their extortion and by the foe whose country they ravaged. They harassed the unwieldy armies of the Padishah by galloping round them and cutting off convoys; and when the troops were once broken they charged home with irresistible fury. Their cavalry moved in large bodies with almost incredible rapidity, and boasted that they watered their horses alike in the Indus and the Cauvery. "Wherever their kettledrums were heard the peasant threw his bag of

rice on his shoulder, hid his small savings in his girdle, and fled with his wife and children to the mountains or the jungles, to the milder neighbourhood of the hyæna and the tiger."

The Carnatic,[1] in which Clive commenced his Indian career, was a district of the Deccan, and one of the latest conquests of Aurungzebe. The first Nawab, Saadat Ullah, having no children, adopted two nephews, Dost Ali and Boker Ali. When he died, in 1732, Dost Ali proclaimed himself Nawab without reference to his Subadar, Nizam ul-Mulk; and Boker became governor of the important fortress of Vellore. The succession was peacefully effected, but the Nizam, resenting the want of deference shown to his authority, prevented the issue of the royal letters of confirmation. Dost Ali, hoping to secure French support in the event of a conflict with his Subadar, entered into intimate relations with M. Dumas, the governor of Pondicherry. He had several daughters, one of whom was married to her cousin, Murtaza Ali, and another to Chunda Sahib, a man of great capacity and restless ambition, who soon contrived to obtain for himself the office of Diwan. The Nawab of the Carnatic was charged with the collection of tribute from two native states, Trichinopoly and Tanjore. In 1736 the Rajah of Trichinopoly died, and Dost Ali, under pretext of collecting the tribute, sent his eldest son, Sufdar Ali, and Chunda Sahib with an army to seize the city. The force marched by way of Madras and Pondicherry, and soon

[1] The country, from Cape Comorin to the Northern Circars, lying east of the Ghauts and reaching to the sea on the Coromandel coast.

accomplished its object. Chunda Sahib was appointed governor, and Sufdar Ali returned to Arcot. Chunda Sahib, who was destined to undergo such strange vicissitudes of fortune during the struggle between the English and French, was not only possessed of great military ability, but skilled in those intrigues which are the life and soul of oriental politics. He was a warm admirer of M. Dumas and the French, and at an early period offered to assist them in extending the territory under their rule. At Trichinopoly he soon began to affect independence, without openly throwing off his allegiance to the Nawab, and, in 1739, he conquered Carical for the French.

In 1740 the Mahrattas overran the Carnatic. Dost Ali was slain in battle, and his son, who now became Nawab, was only too glad to purchase peace at the cost of a year's revenue, and a secret agreement under which the wild marauders were empowered to attack Chunda Sahib, and take possession of Trichinopoly. Towards the end of the year the compact was carried out. The Mahrattas reappeared; Trichinopoly was captured after a gallant defence, and Chunda Sahib was carried captive to Satara. The Mahrattas next swept down upon Pondicherry, and demanded the surrender of Chunda Sahib's wife and family, who had been sent for protection to the French settlement. M. Dumas refused, and an attempt to capture the fort completely failed. The bold refusal of the French governor to surrender his guests, and his successful defence of Pondicherry, created a profound impression. The Padishah gave him the rank and title of Nawab, with the command of horse; and from Cape

Comorin to the Himalayas the *prestige* of the French was raised to a greater height than any European power had previously attained.

In October 1742 Sufdar Ali was murdered at Vellore by his brother-in-law, Murtaza Ali, who at once proclaimed himself Nawab. The revolution so treacherously effected was not generally accepted, and after a short time Said Mahomed Khan, the youthful son of Sufdar Ali, was proclaimed Nawab by the army. Before the agitation produced by these events had subsided, Asaf Jah, better known under his title of Nizam ul-Mulk, paid his memorable visit to the Carnatic. He had held high office under Aurungzebe; and after his death had played a leading part in the war which seated Mahomed Shah upon the throne. His austerity of manner and his open censure of the profligacy of the Court rendered him obnoxious to the Padishah and his dissolute courtiers; and a quarrel with the Vizier in 1723 led to his withdrawal in anger to the Deccan. From that date, though no overt act of rebellion could be charged against him, Nizam ul-Mulk became practically independent, and one-fourth of the mighty Empire of Aurungzebe passed for ever from the throne of Delhi. When Dost Ali assumed the office of Nawab, the Nizam had been too much engaged in keeping a firm front towards Delhi, and in intriguing at the Imperial Court, to pay much attention to the affairs of the Carnatic. But having secured his position by the appointment of his son, Ghazi-ud-din, as captain-general of the Mogul army, he determined to put an end to the disorder in the countries south of the Kistna. He reached Arcot with an army of eighty thousand men in March 1743, and was astonished at

the anarchy that prevailed. Every petty governor was introduced as a Nawab, an assumption of rank which so enraged him that, after eighteen had been presented in one day, he ordered his guards to scourge the next visitor who ventured to assume the title in his presence.

Amongst those who did homage to the Nizam was the son of Sufdar Ali. He was well received, but, in view of his extreme youth, Asaf Jah appointed the commander of his own army Nawab of the Carnatic; and, on his death, selected Anwar-ud-din Khan, a brave experienced soldier, to succeed him. Until the Nizam's visit the Carnatic had been governed by members of a Nowait family, which, at the time of the Mogul conquest, had received extensive *jagirs* in the district. Their rule had, on the whole, been mild and generous; and the introduction of a stranger caused general dissatisfaction. In deference to this feeling the Nizam only appointed Anwar-ud-din administrator of the district and guardian of the young prince, who was to be installed as Nawab when he came of age.

Anwar-ud-din arrived at Arcot in April 1744, and at first all went well. A fitting provision was made for the maintenance of Said Mahomed in his palace at Arcot; and the only source of disquietude was the overbearing conduct of the Pathans who had been in his father's service. In June 1744 Said Mahomed presided at the wedding of one of his relations, and in this capacity had to receive Murtaza Ali, the murderer of his father. Anwar-ud-din was also invited, and as Said went forward to meet him, with his richly attired guests, the leader of the Pathans came forward and plunged a dagger into his heart. As the lad fell a thousand swords leaped

from their scabbards to avenge his death, and the murderer and his companions were cut to pieces by the enraged people. Anwar-ud-din expressed great indignation at the murder; but it was generally believed that the assassination had been previously arranged between him and Murtaza Ali. He received, soon afterwards, a regular commission as Nawab of the Carnatic; but he never completely succeeded in winning the confidence of the people. The angry feelings aroused by the fatal termination to the tragic drama at Arcot had scarcely subsided when Robert Clive, a penniless lad, scarce nineteen years old, and without a friend in the country, landed at Madras to take up his duties as a "writer" in the East India Company's service.

CHAPTER II

ENGLAND AND FRANCE IN INDIA

In the same year, 1744, war was declared between England and France. The two countries had taken opposite sides in the war of the Austrian succession; they had hitherto acted as auxiliaries, they were now to take part in it as principals. Ever since the death of the Emperor, Charles the Sixth, war had been imminent, and as early as 1741 the fertile brain of La Bourdonnais had conceived the idea of capturing Madras, and firmly establishing French predominance in India by assembling an overwhelming naval force in the Indian seas. During the continuance of peace the French governors of Pondicherry, MM. Dumas and Dupleix, made all possible preparation for the struggle; the English did nothing.

Early in the seventeenth century the English established a factory at Surat. In 1639 they founded Madras on a narrow strip of coast land, which they had acquired from the Rajah of Chandragiri. They occupied the position of *zamindars*, or permanent occupiers, and paid a fixed annual rental to the native ruler of the district. The French, Dutch, and Portuguese settlements were founded on lands held upon similar terms. The early history of Madras was a troubled one. The settlers were threatened alternately

by the French and the Dutch; they were constantly exposed to extortionate demands for money from the native princes and their ministers; and they were occasionally besieged by native armies. The town, which for many years was the chief emporium of the English in India, was divided into White Town, or Fort St. George, where the Europeans lived, and Black Town, which was occupied by the natives. Business was conducted by the governor and his council, under whom were the merchants, factors, and writers. All received pay that was little more than nominal, but every servant of the Company was allowed to engage in private trade, and in this manner large fortunes were made. The native custom of receiving presents was universally followed. The Company's servants lived together in the factory, and took their early dinner in the governor's house. Most of them had their palanquins fitted with soft cushions, and every European, when he went out, was followed by a boy bearing a sun-umbrella. The young men were exposed to many temptations; there was a general extravagance and looseness in the mode of living, much gambling and drinking, and frequent brawls at the punch-shops in Black Town. A few European soldiers were maintained as a guard, and, in times of danger Europeans and natives were called to arms, but it was generally more convenient to buy off an enemy than to fight. A strict policy of non-interference in native affairs was followed, and no attempt was made to raise and train companies of native soldiers after European models.

The French *Compagnie des Indes* established a factory at Masulipatam in 1669, the first settlement in India

having been made in the previous year; and in 1674 M. Martin founded Pondicherry. In 1688 the French formed a settlement at Chandernagore, and in 1739 they took possession of Carical. Pondicherry, sheltered from the monsoon and free from surf, was selected as the seat of government. Its first governor, M. Martin, a man of rare energy and discretion, established most cordial relations with the native powers, and instituted the wise policy of treating the natives as friends and equals. In October 1741 M. Dupleix, who had already shown proofs of genius by making Chandernagore the most flourishing settlement in Bengal, was appointed governor. He at once had himself proclaimed Nawab in succession to M. Dumas, and continued his predecessor's policy of establishing friendly intercourse with the native princes. MM. Dumas and Dupleix laid great stress on the fact that they held their rank direct from the Padishah, and as Nawabs they maintained a certain military state which was entirely wanting in the English settlements. To M. Dumas belongs the credit of forming the first sepoy army, for, when besieged by the Mahrattas in 1740, he raised a force of four thousand natives, and armed and drilled them like Europeans. The French company was State-aided and State-directed; but, when war broke out, it was heavily in debt in India, and its finances were embarrassed. The English company had to make payments to the State and overcome the indifference of the king's government; yet it was well supplied with money, and sending remittances to the proprietors in England.

The relations between the European trading companies and the native rulers in 1744, the year of Clive's arrival

in India, are best described in a letter from De Bussy to Dupleix, written when the French power in India was at its zenith.

To form a true judgment of the advantageous change in the affairs of the French in India, we must go back to the times when they were obliged, for the interest of their commerce, in a servile manner, to carry their presents, and pay their homage to those petty chiefs whom we do not at present deign to admit to our *durbar*, except when some particular interest requires it. . . . The Nawab of Arcot, inconsiderable as he is with regard to the Subadar of the Deccan . . . behaved to us as a sovereign to his subjects. His letters to our governors ran in a strain of authority opprobrious to the French nation. We never appeared before him but as suppliants, carrying presents, which he continually exacted from us. If any even of his inferior officers came towards Pondicherry, formal deputations were sent out to meet them with the greatest marks of respect. . . . For a Subadar of the Deccan to condescend to write to the commandant-general of the French was a thing unheard of, and not to be expected. When Nizam ul-Mulk . . . came into the province of Arcot . . . the European nations strove who should give him the strongest marks of their submission, and omitted no means of gaining his favour; yet he deigned not to write to any of the governors who represented those nations; and hardly honoured with a look the rich presents laid with all imaginable respect at his feet, as a token of homage and dependence. . . .

The great plain of the Carnatic, which was now to become the theatre of war, was well cultivated and thickly peopled. Reservoirs, maintained by Government, supplied water for irrigation. The roads were bordered by large trees, which gave a grateful shade, and added to the beauty of the country. Every three or four miles the traveller found a *choultry*, or way-side resting-place, with its attendant Brahman, in which he might

est and cool his thirst. The country was so free from robbers that the diamond-merchants passed through it without carrying a weapon of defence; and it yielded a revenue, in proportion to its extent, equal to that of the richest country in Europe. When the great struggle ended with the fall of Pondicherry, the fertile lands were waste, the villages deserted, and the roads haunted by marauding bands.

The position of France in India, on the outbreak of the war of 1744, was in several respects stronger than that of England. Her political influence amongst the natives and her military resources were greater; her ablest sailor, La Bourdonnais, was at Mauritius, and her settlements were governed by a man of commanding genius—Dupleix. It was clear that the Power which could first bring a strong naval force into the Indian seas would be master of the situation. That advantage was gained by England, and was recklessly thrown away. Directly Dupleix heard that an English squadron was expected on the coast he tried to induce Governor Morse of Madras to agree that, notwithstanding the war, there should be peace between the two countries in India. Mr. Morse refused, and Dupleix then persuaded the Nawab to forbid hostilities. Anwar-ud-din informed the English governor that he would not allow any attack upon the French settlements, and, at the same time, promised that, should the occasion arise, he would protect the English from French aggression. Morse was obliged to comply; and when in 1745 Commodore Barnet reached Madras, he requested him to confine his operations to the sea.

In 1746 La Bourdonnais appeared on the scene, and

the English fleet, after an indecisive action, little creditable to Commodore Peyton, who had succeeded to the command, sailed for Trincomali. The situation was now completely changed. La Bourdonnais had carried out the first part of his long-cherished plan. He had obtained command of the Indian seas, and Madras, badly fortified and garrisoned by only three hundred men, was at his mercy. Differences of opinion between Dupleix and La Bourdonnais delayed the attack; but, on September 21st, 1746, Madras surrendered after a feeble resistance to the French Admiral. Under the terms of the capitulation the English were to be prisoners of war; all property belonging to the East India Company was to be handed over to the French, and the town was to be given up and afterwards ransomed. The terms of the ransom were settled by a separate treaty, and La Bourdonnais is said to have received a private present of £40,000.

When Peyton was driven from Madras Mr. Morse reminded the Nawab of his promised protection, but he carelessly omitted to forward a propitiatory gift. His representations were consequently ignored, and no steps were taken to restrain the French. Whilst the siege was in progress Dupleix kept the Nawab quiet by promising him Madras when it fell, and by telling him that the English would pay a large sum for its ransom. When, however, the town surrendered, and Anwar-ud-din found that the French showed no disposition to give it up, he sent his son, Mahfuz Khan, with an army of ten thousand men to drive them out. The young prince on approaching Madras was roughly handled by the French in a sortie, and thought it prudent to take up a position near

St. Thomé, where he could intercept reinforcements arriving from Pondicherry. Here, on October 24th, 1746, he was defeated by M. Paradis in the memorable battle which completely altered the relations between the Europeans and the native princes, and paved the way for the ambitious schemes of Dupleix. The superiority of disciplined troops to native levies was firmly established, and the European traders who, previous to the battle, had been despised as inferiors were after it regarded as equals to be at once courted and feared. Paradis, who had only two hundred and thirty Europeans and seven hundred sepoys, owed his victory to the discipline of his men and to the promptness and boldness of his attack on the enemy's guns. The success of the brilliant Swiss soldier and the causes which led to it appear to have made a lasting impression on the mind of young Clive, then a prisoner of war at Madras.

After the victory Paradis was appointed Governor of Madras, and, under instructions from Dupleix, declared the treaty of ransom and all engagements between Governor Morse and Admiral La Bourdonnais null and void. The terms of the capitulation were violated and more onerous ones imposed. Mr. Morse and several of the principal merchants were removed to Pondicherry; many of the settlers were ruined; and others, amongst whom was Clive, escaped to Fort St. David, where a bolder spirit ruled over the destinies of the English. La Bourdonnais, in agreeing to the terms of capitulation and signing the treaty of ransom, relied upon his instructions from home, and refused to recognise the authority of the Governor of Pondicherry. Dupleix, on the other hand, claimed supreme power as Governor-

General of India, but he would probably not have ignored the solemn promises of the Admiral if Paradis had not previously dispersed the army of the Nawab. The disputes and animosities of the two great Frenchmen saved the English in India from complete destruction.

During the winter of 1746-47 the French attempted, in a half-hearted manner, to capture Cuddalore and Fort St. David, which had now become the seat of government; and in June 1748 they made a more determined attack on the former place, which was sharply repulsed by Major Stringer Lawrence. Throughout this period Dupleix was all-powerful. He had a large force of Europeans, and had succeeded in signing a treaty of amity with the Nawab, yet he never made the one vigorous effort that was necessary to dislodge the two hundred Englishmen who guarded the ramparts of Fort St. David. The golden opportunity was lost, for on August 11th, 1748, English preponderance was restored by the arrival of Admiral Boscawen with an overwhelming force. On September 6th Boscawen moved on Pondicherry. He held a commission as Admiral and Commander-in-Chief of the land and sea forces; but he was without experience of military operations, and Lawrence, the only man who could have helped him in his difficulties, had been taken prisoner at Ariankupam. The siege was pushed forward with little energy and less skill; the defence was conducted with the greatest determination and gallantry. There could be but one result. The English, after the loss of more than one thousand Europeans, were obliged to raise the siege, and on October 17th they retired thoroughly disheartened to Fort St.

David. Dupleix at once sent messengers to inform the native princes of his successful defence of Pondicherry against the most formidable army that had ever landed on the shores of India. The fame of his exploits reached Delhi, and throughout the peninsula men believed that soldiers of France were superior to those of England. The siege was little creditable to the British arms, yet Clive, who served in the trenches, found an opportunity of showing, by his gallant conduct, that high military spirit which was conspicuous throughout his career.

Early in December news arrived that a cessation of hostilities had been proclaimed in Europe, pending negotiations for peace. The treaty itself, under which there was to be a mutual restitution of conquests, was signed at Aix-la-Chapelle on October 18th, 1748; but it was not until August 1749 that its terms were carried out in India by the restoration of Madras to Admiral Boscawen. The sword was sheathed, but the struggle, which had left behind it so many angry passions and mutual jealousies, was soon to recommence in another form. Henceforward, however, the history of the English in India becomes more and more intimately connected with the life of Robert Clive.

CHAPTER III

EARLY LIFE—ARCOT

Robert, Lord Clive, was born at Styche, near Market Drayton in Shropshire, on September 29th, 1725. His father, Richard Clive, finding the income from the old family estate of Styche too small for the support of a large family, followed the profession of the law. He appears to have been a man of hasty, sometimes violent, temper, who never appreciated his son's merits until he had made himself famous, though he was afterwards so unduly elated by his success that he could talk and write of nothing but "Bobby's" triumphs. His mother, to whom he always said that he owed more than to any school, was a lady remarkable for her virtues, her talents, and her sterling good sense. She was a daughter of Mr. Gaskill of Manchester, and of her sisters one married Mr. Bayley of Hope Hall, near Manchester, and another Hugh, eleventh Lord Sempill.

Robert Clive, who was the eldest son, was sent to Hope Hall before he was three years old, and for several years was trained and educated in Mr. Bayley's family. When not more than four or five he had two severe attacks of fever, which appear to have left a constitutional weakness that was the source of much trouble

in after life. His school life commenced while he was still very young at Dr. Eaton's private school at Lostocke in Cheshire. At the age of eleven he was removed to the care of the Rev. Mr. Burslem at Market Drayton, with whom he remained a few years, and then, after a brief public school experience at Merchant Taylors', he went to a private school kept by Mr. Sterling at Hemel Hemstead in Hertfordshire. At the last place he remained until he was appointed in 1743 a writer in the East India Company's service.

In early life Clive's waywardness and his neglect of school studies appear to have produced an unfavourable impression upon his masters. One indeed, Dr. Eaton, had the happy foresight to predict, "If that lad should live to be a man, and an opportunity be given for the exertion of his talents, few names will be greater than his." To the others he was only "the most unlucky boy they had ever had in their schools." Yet strong indications of future character were not wanting in the lad's imperious temper, his insensibility to danger, his impatience of control, his dislike to the drudgery of the s am and his keen desire to excel in all boyish pursuits. he Gc he was seven years old his temper was the subject to ap xious care to his relations. "I am satisfied," Mr. me t y writes, "that his fighting (to which he is out of missi ure addicted) gives his temper [such] a fierceness and and riousness that he flies out upon every trifling occa- thi ; for this reason I do what I can to suppress the hero, sp t I may help forward the more valuable qualities of in ekness, benevolence, and patience." When at Market a ayton he is said to have been the leader of a band of outhful Mohawks in all their mischievous tricks, now

levying blackmail on anxious shopkeepers trembling for the security of their windows; now turning his body into a temporary dam across the street-gutter, to flood the shop of an offending tradesman. It was in the same town that, on one occasion, he climbed out to obtain a smooth stone that lay in one of the dragon-headed gargoyles of the old Gothic church, and calmly seated himself in mid-air, to the wondering alarm of his companions.

Clive left England in 1743, and, after a delay of nine months in the Brazils, reached Madras towards the end of 1744. The enforced detention, though it enabled him to learn Portuguese, was unfortunate, for he found on landing that the gentleman to whom he had been given letters of introduction had left for England. For some little time he was without money and without friends, and he appears to have felt his position acutely. His early letters to his relations, while they show a warm, affectionate heart, are despondent in tone, and display a distrust of his own powers remarkable in one who was to give such early proof of indomitable will. He was dissatisfied, and begged his fa to get him transferred to Bengal, or promoter the rank of factor. "I don't doubt," he says, r you'll make use of all possible means for my adv ment. The world seems to be greatly debased of and interest carries it entirely before merit, espec in this service, though I should think myself very deserving were I only to build my foundation on strength of the former." To a cousin he writes th "the intemperance of the climate, together with th excessive heat of the sun, are very noxious to our health

and I really think the advantages which accrue to us here are greatly overbalanced by the sacrifices we make of our constitutions. I have not been unacquainted with the fickleness of fortune, and may safely say I have not enjoyed one happy day since I left my native country. I am not acquainted with any one family in the place, and have not assurance enough to introduce myself without being asked."

After his arrival in India Clive was fortunate enough to obtain access to an excellent library in Government House, and he must have made good use of the opportunity. There is no record of the manner in which he fitted himself for his work in life, but before Madras surrendered he seems to have made himself a fair Latin scholar, and to have acquired that intimate acquaintance with the politics and character of the natives which contributed so largely to his successful career. His strong, decided character is said to have "rendered his appointment as troublesome to his superiors as it was irksome to himself;" and his abhorrence of compulsion is amusingly illustrated by his reply to an invitation from the Governor's secretary, to whom he had been ordered to apologise: "No, sir, the Governor did not command me to dine with you." Yet when he obtained a commission he never complained of military discipline, and never grew impatient under its yoke. During this period he is said, either in a fit of despair or of low spirits, to have attempted suicide. A companion, coming into his room on one occasion, was requested to take up a pistol and fire it out of the window. He did so; whereupon Clive, who was in one of his gloomy moods, he hang up, and exclaimed: "Well, I am reserved for

something! I have twice snapped that pistol at my own head."

The disgraceful surrender of Madras to the French, and the infraction of the terms of the capitulation by Dupleix, mark a turning-point in Clive's career. The proud spirit of the young civilian could ill bear the humiliating position at Madras. He disguised himself in native attire and fled, with Edmund Maskelyne his future brother-in-law, to Fort St. David, where the British flag still waved over men determined to uphold the honour of their country. Soon after his arrival at the fort he fought a duel with one of two ensigns in the Company's service who had been detected cheating at cards. He had lost and, in refusing to pay, passed some strong remarks on the conduct of the officer, who at once called him out. Clive fired and missed his opponent, who, walking up to him, held the pistol to his head and bade him ask for his life. After some hesitation he complied, but, when further pressed to withdraw his remarks and promise payment, he replied, "Fire and be d—d! I said you cheated; I say so still, and I will never pay you." The astonished ensign, finding threats useless, called him a madman, and flung his pistol away. When Clive's friends complimented him on his behaviour, he generously remarked, "The man has given me my life; and though I will never pay him nor associate with him again, I have no right in future to mention his behaviour at the card-table."

Clive was at Fort St. David when the French made their three abortive attempts upon the place during the winter of 1746-47; and though his name is not mentioned in connection with military affairs, he no doubt took

turn of duty with the rest of the garrison, and was a keen, observant spectator of all that passed. The liability of the French troops to panic, the native dread of well-served artillery, the ease with which a small disciplined force could keep a native army in check, were lessons not to be lightly forgotten. It was a time when a writer in the Company's service had little to do; and it is not surprising that a man of Clive's energetic temperament should have elected to enter the army. In 1747 he asked for and obtained a commission as ensign; and in the following year he showed, at the siege of Pondicherry, some of those soldierly qualities which, in after years, won for him the admiration and confidence of the troops. Upon one occasion, whilst the French were making a vigorous sortie, he ran back from the advanced trench to bring up powder to the battery in which he was serving. The incident gave rise to a remark that he had quitted his post from fear. Clive, on hearing what had been said, went with a friend to the officer who had made the remark, and insisted upon instant satisfaction. As they were retiring to settle the dispute the officer, who was following, struck him on the ear. He at once drew, and his example was followed by his opponent, but before they had crossed swords they were separated. A court of inquiry was held, and the officer who had defamed Clive was ordered to beg his pardon at the head of the battalion. The court, however, unwilling to break him, took no notice of the blow. After the siege had been raised, and the troops had retired upon Fort St. David, Clive demanded satisfaction for this last insult, and when it was refused he laid his cane on the officer's head, and told him he

could not think of thrashing such a contemptible cowa The next day the officer resigned his commission.

In these early incidents of his career Clive never appears as the aggressor. He expresses his opinion firmly and decidedly, and he is ever ready to resent an insult; but he never seeks a quarrel. If he had possessed the turbulent disposition with which he has been credited, he would, in an age when duelling prevailed, have degenerated into a bully. The haughty reserve of his manner was ill calculated to make him popular with the young writers and ensigns who were his daily companions, and with whom there must have been frequent sources of quarrel, yet his worst enemies were unable to bring forward any anecdote to his dishonour or discredit. He was soon to give proof of the high qualities that he possessed.

When hostilities ceased in December 1748 England and France had an unusual number of troops in India whose presence was the source of considerable anxiety to the local governors. It was impossible for either nation to disband before the arrival of definite news that peace had been concluded; and it was at the same time necessary to find employment and sustenance for the soldiers. Each side, partly from motives of economy, partly from a desire to gain some material advantage, resolved to employ its troops as mercenaries in the quarrels of the native princes. The adoption of this policy, which Dupleix justifies in a remarkable letter to the French Company, marks a turning-point in the history of India. In carrying it out the English "acted with great indiscretion, the French with the utmost ambition."

The first venture of the English was in favour of a native prince, Seiaji, who some years previously had been compelled to vacate the throne of Tanjore in favour of his brother, Pertab Sing. He had been much impressed by the ease with which the disciplined troops of Paradis had defeated Mahfuz Khan, and determined to solicit European assistance in an attempt to regain his throne. An old quarrel with the French having rendered the success of an appeal to Dupleix doubtful, Seiaji applied to the English and offered, if they would restore him, to cede Devicotta and pay the cost of the war. Devicotta, near the mouth of the Colerun, was the chief outlet for the trade of a rich district, sometimes called "the garden of Southern India," and immediate advantages would result from its possession. The English, still smarting under the loss of Madras and the humiliating retreat from Pondicherry, were unable to resist the temptation, and espoused the cause of Seiaji. A first attempt to take Devicotta in April 1749 failed. Captain Cope, who commanded the British force, found the ramparts manned by "innumerable troops," and, though urged by Clive to blow the gates open and deliver an assault, retired to Fort St. David. A second expedition under Major Stringer Lawrence was more successful. Devicotta was taken, and the Tanjore army was afterwards sharply repulsed in an attempt to capture the pagoda of Atchaveram, which the English had occupied. At this moment the Rajah heard of the defeat and death of the Nawab of the Carnatic, and hastened to conclude peace. During the second attack on Devicotta, Clive, who led the forlorn hope, behaved with great gallantry. Advancing with thirty-four Europeans

and seven hundred sepoys, he had some difficulty in crossing a rivulet under a smart fire from the fort. The sepoys hesitated and held back, while Clive and the Europeans pushed on to the foot of the breach, where they were suddenly charged by a party of Tanjore horse. So impetuous was the attack that twenty-six men were cut down in a moment, and Clive himself narrowly escaped being sabred.

At the close of the operations Clive, through the influence of Lawrence, was appointed Commissary to the British troops. He had, however, scarcely taken over his duties when he was prostrated by a severe attack of fever, accompanied "by a hard swelling at the pit of the stomach," which so affected his spirits that the constant presence of an attendant was absolutely necessary. On the subsidence of the fever he went to Bengal for change of air, and returned with much improved health; but his constitution had been so severely shaken that "during the remainder of his life, excepting when his mind was ardently engaged, the oppression on his spirits frequently returned."

Whilst the English were engaged in supporting the cause of Seiaji, the French, under the guidance of Dupleix, had been making themselves masters of the Carnatic. Soon after his arrival at Pondicherry Dupleix entered into communication with Chunda Sahib, then a prisoner at Satara. He deemed it prudent to keep on friendly terms with a man who might again be in a position to advance French commercial interests, and did not at first think of questioning the power of the native princes. There can, however, be little doubt that, after Paradis had gained the victory of St. Thomé,

visions of future empire and of a quicker road to fame and fortune than the slow paths of commerce became more and more familiar to his mind. His dream was to rule the Carnatic, perhaps India itself, through natives who owed their elevation and retention of office to his support. He saw that by skilfully taking advantage of the mutual jealousies and rivalries of the native princes, and by discreetly holding the balance of power between them, he could obtain all that he wanted and enjoy the sweets of empire without its responsibilities. He had found in Chunda Sahib a fitting instrument for his schemes; and it was only necessary to wait for a favourable opportunity to carry out the subtle policy he had conceived.

In June 1748 the Subadar of the Deccan died, and his death was immediately followed by a war for the succession between his second son, Nasir Jung, and his grandson, Muzuffar Jung. Muzuffar went to Satara to ask Balaji Rao, the Mahratta chieftain, to support his cause, and there met Chunda Sahib, who readily entered into his schemes on being promised the post of Nawab of the Carnatic. The negotiations with the Mahrattas were communicated to Dupleix, who saw that by supporting Muzuffar Jung and Chunda Sahib he would be in a position to give a Subadar to the Deccan and a Nawab to the Carnatic. He guaranteed the ransom (£70,000) demanded for the release of Chunda Sahib, and promised to help Muzuffar Jung with a mixed force of Europeans and sepoys. Operations were to commence in the Carnatic, where the people were in favour of Chunda Sahib, and the French could most easily support the movement. There was some delay in consequence

of the siege of Pondicherry and the threatening attitude which Admiral Boscawen, who was in superior force at Fort St. David, afterwards maintained. But as soon as the English were fully occupied in Tanjore Muzuffar Jung and Chunda Sahib swooped down upon the Carnatic, and on August 3rd, with the aid of a French detachment, gained a decisive victory over the Nawab at Ambur. Anwar-ud-din was killed, his eldest son, Mahfuz Khan, was taken prisoner, and his second son, Mahomed Ali, fled to Trichinopoly. Arcot was occupied next day, and Muzuffar Jung, after proclaiming himself Subadar, invested Chunda Sahib with the government of the Carnatic. Dupleix, who afterwards entertained the victors with great magnificence at Pondicherry, received the zamindari of eighty-one villages in return for his support. The capture of the fortress of Trichinopoly, in which Mahomed Ali had taken refuge, now became of paramount importance. It would complete the conquest of the Carnatic, and firmly establish the supremacy of the French Nawab before Nasir Jung, who was already gathering his forces, could appear on the scene. Dupleix repeatedly urged upon Chunda Sahib the necessity for immediate action, but he could not induce him to move as long as Boscawen remained at Madras.

Mahomed Ali, immediately after his father's death, applied to the English for assistance. Admiral Boscawen was in favour of supporting him, but the Governor of Fort St. David, Mr. Floyer, was anxious to regain possession of Madras, and hesitated to embark on what seemed likely to prove a doubtful enterprise. The English complimented Chunda Sahib on his accession,

and it was only when his reception at Pondicherry showed the true nature of Dupleix's schemes that they realised the necessity of supporting Mahomed Ali in their own self-defence. They reoccupied Madras at the end of August, and it was Boscawen's wish to adopt energetic measures in defence of English interests. Mr. Floyer was incapable of acting with decision. He sent Captain Cope with a few men to Trichinopoly to protect Mahomed Ali until the will of Nasir Jung was known, and allowed Boscawen to sail, with all his men except three hundred, on November 1st. The following day Chunda Sahib left Pondicherry with a large native force and a strong European contingent under M. Duquesne. His destination was Trichinopoly, but he was in want of money, and turned aside to plunder the Rajah of Tanjore. On this expedition he wasted precious time, which should have been devoted to the destruction of the last refuge of his only rival; and he was still before Tanjore when Nasir Jung entered the Carnatic with an army of two hundred thousand men. Chunda Sahib at once retired to Pondicherry, whilst Mahomed Ali and Captain Cope joined Nasir Jung at Vilnur, a few miles from the French settlement. Dupleix made vigorous efforts to meet the threatened attack, and by the end of March Muzuffar Jung and Chunda Sahib, with two thousand Europeans under D'Auteuil, were able to take up a strong position in front of Vilnur. On April 2nd Lawrence reached the camp of Nasir Jung with six hundred men, and the soldiers of England and France were ranged for the first time in hostile camps as mercenaries of the native princes. An inquiry into the pretensions of the rival Subadars would

be fruitless, the claimants to the power which Nizam ul-Mulk had gained by usurpation could appeal to no other law than that by which it had been obtained. The European companies gave little attention to the justice of the cause. Each sought only its own aggrandisement and the humiliation of its rival. Dupleix having taken the part of Muzuffar the English were obliged in self-defence to support Nasir Jung. On the 3rd, before hostilities commenced, D'Auteuil sent a messenger to tell Lawrence that he had no wish or intention to spill European blood, and that, as he did not know his position in the field, he could not be blamed if a shot came that way and hurt an Englishman. Lawrence replied that his position might be easily recognised by the English colours on his flag-gun, and that if any shots came his way he would certainly return them. A brief cannonade followed, and during the night D'Auteuil, in consequence of a mutiny amongst the French officers, withdrew to Pondicherry. Muzuffar Jung surrendered to his uncle, and was at once placed in irons. It seemed for the moment as if the ambitious schemes of the French governor had completely failed. The disaster only served to show the fertility of his genius. Whilst Lawrence was openly pressing Nasir Jung to follow up his advantage, Dupleix was successfully intriguing with the French party in his camp. The Subadar refused to grant the extension of Madras territory which had been promised as the price of English assistance, and retired to lead a life of debauchery and indolence at Arcot. Lawrence returned in disgust to Fort St. David, and the French soon redeemed their reputation by a successful attack on a part of

the Subadar's army, and by the capture of Masulipatam and Tiruvadi. On September 1st Chunda Sahib and the French attacked and entirely routed Mahomed Ali; and on the 11th De Bussy stormed Gingi, a fortress that was regarded as impregnable. Nasir Jung was at last roused to action; he moved his camp to within twelve miles of Gingi, and commenced negotiations with the French. Dupleix, whilst discussing the terms of a treaty, entered into communication with some discontented Pathan Nawabs and others in the Subadar's camp, and promised to support them when their plans were ripe for execution. On the morning of December 16th the French attacked Nasir Jung, who, whilst the action was in progress, was shot by one of the conspirators. His fall terminated the engagement. Immense treasure in money and jewels fell into the hands of the French, and their *protégé*, Muzuffar Jung, released from his bonds, became Subadar of the Deccan. On December 26th the victorious army returned to Pondicherry, and the division of the spoil commenced. Dupleix was appointed governor of all the countries south of the Kistna, and was granted as a personal *jagir* the fortress of Valdavur, with its lands and villages, and £10,000 a year; Chunda Sahib was formally appointed Nawab of the Carnatic under the French governor; £50,000 were given to the soldiers; and the same sum, with land yielding £40,000 a year, to the French Company.

Dupleix now assumed the state and ceremony of an oriental prince. He clad himself in costly native dresses, trimmed with jewels, and held regular *durbars*, at which even the members of his council were compelled to offer the customary presents on bended knee.

He was always surrounded by richly-attired attendants, and when he rode out on his elephant he was accompanied by men bearing the banners and emblems appropriate to his rank. With a deep knowledge of the native character, he decreed the foundation of a town, to be called Dupleix-Futtehabad (the place of the victory of Dupleix), on the spot where Nasir Jung fell. His energy, his tact, and his audacity had been rewarded by marvellous but well-deserved success; he ruled southern India through a puppet prince, and his dreams of empire were at last realised. French supremacy seemed so firmly established in the Carnatic that Dupleix allowed De Bussy, with a small European force, to accompany Muzuffar Jung to Aurungabad. They left Pondicherry in January 1751, and not long after there was another revolution, during which Muzuffar Jung was killed. M. de Bussy proclaimed Salabat Jung, one of the imprisoned sons of Nizam ul-Mulk, Subadar, and obtained from him a confirmation of all grants made by his predecessor to Dupleix. The army then continued its march.

In the summer of 1750 the government of Fort St. David had passed into the hands of Mr. Saunders, a man of sound judgment, great courage, and indomitable firmness. He saw the danger to which the death of Nasir Jung had exposed the English settlements, and that the establishment of French supremacy was incompatible with their existence. Lawrence had left, and the British force on the coast was much inferior to that of the French, yet with a courage and promptitude that have never been sufficiently acknowledged, he decided to support Mahomed Ali with all the means at his dis-

posal. In January 1751 Captain Cope was sent with a strong detachment to Trichinopoly, and an unsuccessful attempt was made to capture Madura. In March the French took the field, and an English force under Captain Gingen, with whom Clive, now restored to health, served as commissariat officer, was ordered to observe them. Having ascertained that their destination was Trichinopoly, Gingen established himself at Volcondah, a large town forty-five miles from Trichinopoly on the road to Arcot. On July 20th an unsuccessful attempt to take the fort at that place led to a disgraceful panic. The English fled amidst the taunts of their native allies and abandoned their camp, guns, and ammunition. With hardly an attempt at resistance they were driven from one strong position to another until, on July 28th, they found safety beneath the walls of Trichinopoly. Clive, who with others had attempted to rally the fugitives, returned to Fort St. David, where his gallantry was afterwards rewarded by promotion to the rank of captain.

The town of Trichinopoly is situated in a plain about half a mile from the right bank of the Cauvery, and at the time of the siege it was rectangular in form, and nearly four miles in circumference. It was protected by a double *enceinte* of masonry with flanking towers, and by a ditch thirty feet wide and fifteen feet deep. In the north quarter of the town a large mass of gneiss, crowned by a Siva temple, rose abruptly to a height of two hundred and thirty-six feet, and afforded a commanding view over the historic plain upon which England and France contended for the supremacy of India. The plain, though apparently level, is full of hollow ways,

which afford good cover for troops, and give a person thoroughly acquainted with the ground great advantages; and water can always be obtained. South of the town the rock is everywhere close to the surface, and in this direction are the Sugar-loaf Rock, and the Golden Rock, about a hundred feet high; while to the east are some low hills, known as the French Rocks, and the almost inaccessible rock of Elmiseram. These rocks were much used by both armies, and one of them, the Golden Rock, was immortalised by the heroism of Lawrence's grenadiers. Some twelve miles west of Trichinopoly the Cauvery is divided by the island of Seringham into two branches, which would naturally reunite fifteen miles east of the town if they were not kept apart by an ancient dam. The northern arm takes the name of Colerun, and, after a course of ninety miles, reaches the sea near Devicotta; the southern spreads out into innumerable channels, and converts the district of Tanjore into the garden of southern India. On an island, in face of Trichinopoly, is the celebrated pagoda of Seringham, with its hall of a thousand columns and its elaborately-carved granite monoliths, and not far from it is the less important temple of Jamba Kishna. The island, with its two pagodas, is a convenient position for a besieging army that can keep its communications open; when that ceases to be the case it becomes a trap. The ancient dam, erected to regulate the irrigation of Tanjore, was protected by the fort of Koiladi, which belonged to Trichinopoly, and the rulers of this place, by threatening to cut off the water supply, could always ensure the submission of Tanjore. A knowledge of this fact ranged the Rajah of Tanjore on the side of the English, and

for a long time their only communication between the coast and Trichinopoly was through his territory.

When Captain Gingen fell back on Trichinopoly, Chunda Sahib and the French, under M. Law, occupied Seringham, and, crossing the Cauvery, established batteries at the French Rocks, to the east of the town. Mr. Saunders, who was fully alive to the gravity of the crisis, determined to hold on at all hazards to Trichinopoly. Reinforcements arrived from England at the end of June, and soon afterwards Mr. Pigot, a member of Council, and Clive succeeded in passing men and stores into the town. As they were returning they were attacked, and had to seek safety in flight after their ammunition was exhausted, and seven of their small escort of twelve sepoys had been killed. A little later, Clive, after a sharp skirmish with the French, entered Trichinopoly with a second convoy. On his return to Fort St. David in August he drew a lamentable picture of the condition of the garrison. The men were disheartened, and had lost all confidence in their commander. The officers were without enterprise; they passed their time in quarrelling, and made no attempt to annoy the enemy, who were in superior force, and seemed inclined to press the siege vigorously. It was clear that the town would fall unless a vigorous effort were made to relieve it; and that, when it fell, the safety of the British settlements would be seriously endangered. The position of the English was in truth well-nigh desperate.

This crisis of the war was Clive's opportunity. With true military instinct he saw that Dupleix, by detaching De Bussy to Aurungabad, and sending M. Law and Chunda Sahib to Trichinopoly, had left Arcot

unprotected; and that an attack on the capital of the Carnatic would probably induce the enemy to detach a portion of his besieging force from Trichinopoly for its protection. He proposed to the Governor of Fort St. David to lead an expedition against Arcot, and his suggestion was eagerly adopted. Mr. Saunders almost denuded Madras and Fort St. David of troops to form the detachment; though after all it only consisted of two hundred Europeans and three hundred sepoys, with three light field-pieces. To command the men there were eight officers, of whom six had never seen a shot fired in anger, and four had, like their chief, exchanged the pen for the sword. With this small force, apparently so little fitted for a perilous enterprise, Clive marched out of Madras, on September 6th, to win deathless renown. On the 9th he was at Conjeveram, and, hearing there that Arcot was garrisoned by eleven hundred men, sent back to Madras for two eighteen-pounders. There was, however, no pause, and on the 11th the detachment, after marching with unbroken ranks through one of those fierce thunderstorms that occasionally sweep over the plains of the Carnatic, halted within ten miles of Arcot. During the march Clive showed that he possessed that insight into native character which is so essential to success in an oriental country, and proved himself a born leader of men. In six short days he welded his hastily-gathered force together, and imparted to it his own enthusiastic confidence in the result of the enterprise. The natives were awed by the strict discipline maintained, and by the steady onward march, unchecked by the horrors of the driving storm. The garrison fled

without firing a shot, and the British column marched through streets thronged with one hundred thousand wondering spectators, to take possession of the fort.

The prize was won, but Clive knew well that the enemy would dispute his power to keep it as soon as they had recovered from their panic and realised the smallness of his force. Preparations were at once made to resist the inevitable siege. The principal inhabitants were conciliated by the restoration of their property; the townspeople were so well treated that they remained neutral throughout the operations; provisions and stores were collected; the existing defences were strengthened, and new works thrown up. A purely defensive policy, however, would have created a bad impression, and was little suited to the impetuosity of Clive's character. On September 15th and 17th he beat up the enemy's quarters, and on the 25th he surprised their camp before daylight, and completely dispersed them without the loss of a man. Shortly afterwards the enemy, emboldened by the absence of a strong detachment, which had been sent to Conjeveram to meet and escort the two eighteen-pounders from Madras, hazarded a night attack. Two attempts were made to force the main gates, and throughout the night a continuous fire of musketry was directed against the fort; but everywhere a bold front was shown by the garrison, and when, in the gray dawn, the absent detachment was seen entering the town the enemy fled. Meantime the occupation of Arcot had produced the desired effect. Chunda Sahib detached four thousand men from the force with which he was blockading Trichinopoly, and entrusted the recovery of his capital to his son, Rezza Sahib, who was joined on the

march by one hundred and fifty French soldiers from Pondicherry.

Rezza Sahib entered the city on October 3rd, and took up his quarters in the palace of the Nawab. The next day Clive made a vigorous sortie, and drove the French troops from their guns; but he was unable to follow up his advantage, and was eventually obliged to withdraw with heavy loss. On the 6th Murtaza Ali joined Rezza Sahib with two thousand men, and completed the investment. The siege that followed is one of the most remarkable in history. The fort was near the centre of the town, and more than a mile in circumference. The walls were crumbling. The ramparts were too narrow for guns in action. The parapets were low and of perilously weak profile. The flanking towers were either in ruins or so small that only one gun could be mounted on each. The *fausse-braie* was unfinished and had no parapet. The wet ditch, nearly everywhere fordable, was in places dry or choked with rubbish. The two gateways, huge piles of masonry projecting forty feet beyond the wall, were approached by solid causeways that had no drawbridges; and the houses, which ran up to the foot of the *glacis*, gave excellent cover to sharpshooters within easy musket-shot of the ramparts. Such was the place that Clive dared to defend with a handful of men against an army of one hundred and fifty Europeans, two thousand trained sepoys, three thousand native cavalry and five thousand native footmc For seven long weeks the fort was girdled with fir from the adjoining houses came a ceaseless rattle musketry, from the gun and mortar batteries an almo continuous storm of shot and shell. Incautious exposur

on the ramparts was certain death, and no one was allowed to remain upon them except those whose duty it was to watch the foe. Clive, whose sleepless vigilance and fearless courage were conspicuous throughout, kept up the spirits of his men by repeated sorties. He constructed retrenchments in rear of the breaches in the walls, and raised a mound from which his gunners could fire upon the Nawab's palace. Messengers to beg for aid were despatched to Madras and to Morar Rao, the Mahratta chieftain, who, though engaged to assist Mahomed Ali, was waiting to see which side would prove the stronger. A small detachment sent from Madras was compelled to return without attaining its object. Morar Rao, filled with admiration of the fighting qualities of Clive and his men, promised immediate assistance.

On November 10th Rezza Sahib made a last attempt to bribe Clive, and, when that failed, to intimidate him into a peaceful surrender of the fort; his overtures and threats were alike treated with contempt. On the 20th the garrison were cheered by the appearance of the Mahratta horsemen, who swept like a whirlwind round the city and intercepted the enemy's supplies. About the same time news reached Rezza Sahib that the Madras detachment, strongly reinforced, was again advancing under Captain Kilpatrick, and he determined to hazard an assault before its arrival compelled him to retire. The day selected for the attempt was the first of Moharram, the festival of the martyred Imams, Hassan and Hussein, which fell that year on November 25th. Clive, warned by his spies of the designs of the enemy, made his dispositions, and then,

worn out with fatigue, lay down to sleep. The assault was delivered at dawn, and the stormers, inflamed to madness by bang, and impelled by religious frenzy, rushed forward with impetuosity to win death and the joys of Paradise in the deadly breach. Four columns advanced to the attack. Two tried to force open the gates by employing elephants, with iron plates on their heads, as battering-rams; but the huge beasts, galled by the musketry fire from the fort, turned and, charging the advancing columns, threw them into disorder. The remaining columns attempted to storm the two breaches. The assailants crossed the ditch and crowded into the unfinished *fausse-braie* and the breaches. The defenders reserved their fire until the stormers reached the ditches of the retrenchments, and then delivered it with crushing effect. Hand-grenades and shells, previously prepared, were rolled over the parapet into the surging crowds in the *fausse-braie*, while the supports, as they advanced, were met by a heavy fire of musketry and artillery. Clive himself, at a critical moment, laid one of the field-pieces with his own hands, and sank a raft on which the enemy were crossing the ditch. After an hour's struggle the enemy were repulsed at every point, and the shattered columns slowly withdrew to the adjacent houses, whence they kept up a harassing fire against the fort. Suddenly the firing ceased. The enemy had hurriedly decamped, leaving guns, ammunition, and treasure chest behind; and when daylight broke, two hundred unconquered soldiers, who had survived the perils of the siege, marched out to reap the fruits of victory. Who shall apportion praise where all were worthy? Officers and men, European and sepoy, were animated by the same

undaunted spirit; they were one in their absolute devotion to the young chief who had taught them to triumph over every obstacle, and one in their heroic endurance of hardship and privation. When the rice began to fail the sepoys begged that the grain might be reserved for their European comrades, and that they might be given only the water in which it was boiled. Military history, full as it is of noble acts of heroism, records no more touching instance of self-devotion.

On the evening of the 26th Kilpatrick marched into Arcot with the long-expected reinforcements, and on the 30th Clive took the field with two hundred Europeans, seven hundred sepoys, and one thousand Mahratta horse. After receiving the submission of Timeri, and making a demonstration towards Vellore, he marched on Arni, and on December 14th defeated Rezza Sahib and a force of five thousand men, including three hundred Europeans who had recently arrived from Pondicherry. The victory, which was greatly due to the skilful use made by Clive of his artillery, was complete; the enemy retired in disorder, and much booty fell into the hands of the victors. The effect produced by this first success of the English in the open field was instantaneous; six hundred trained sepoys passed over with their arms, and were enrolled in the British force; and many of the small local chiefs submitted to Mahomed Ali. The force of Rezza Sahib having thus been dispersed, Clive determined to reduce the great pagoda of Conjeveram, on the line of communication between Madras and Arcot, which was still occupied by the French. The commandant held out until the walls

were breached, and then evacuated the pagoda. Clive, after destroying the defences and reinforcing the garrison of Arcot, returned to Madras, and thence proceeded to Fort St. David to report to Government on the result of his campaign.

CHAPTER IV

CAVERIPAK—TRICHINOPOLY

CLIVE had no sooner retired from the field than Rezza Sahib began to reassemble his troops and ravage the Company's territory. Villages were burned, and even the country houses of the English at the foot of St. Thomas's Mount were plundered. The Company's revenue was so seriously impaired by these inroads that it was deemed indispensable to check them before an attempt was made to relieve Trichinopoly. Early in February Clive was sent to Madras, and on the 22nd he again took the field with three hundred and eighty Europeans, one thousand three hundred sepoys, and six field-pieces. The force opposed to him, which consisted of four hundred Europeans, two thousand sepoys, two thousand five hundred native cavalry, and a large train of artillery, was then lying in an entrenched camp at Vendalore, about seventeen miles south-west of Madras. Clive, half of whose men had been drawn from the Arcot garrison, marched on Vendalore, and on reaching that place ascertained that Rezza Sahib had broken up his camp and concentrated at Conjeveram. He at once realised the serious danger to which Arcot was exposed, and fearing the result of a sudden

attack on its weakened garrison, made a forced march to Conjeveram, which surrendered at the first summons. The troops were too fatigued to continue their march that day, but next morning they followed Rezza Sahib, who was now known to be in full march on Arcot. At sunset, when in sight of Caveripak, the column unexpectedly came into contact with the enemy, and was greeted by a heavy fire from nine guns, which had been posted in a thick mango grove some two hundred and fifty yards to the right of the road. Clive, whose presence of mind never forsook him, at once provided for the safety of his baggage, and disposed his troops for action. He ordered part of them to take cover in a watercourse to the left of the road, and sent the remainder to hold Rezza Sahib's cavalry in check on the plain beyond. After two hours' desultory fighting by moonlight, during which the English guns were almost silenced by the superior fire of the enemy, Clive saw that he must either gain possession of the guns in the grove or retire. The French battery was protected in front by a ditch and bank and supported by one hundred Europeans and a large force of sepoys, but a sergeant who had been sent forward to reconnoitre reported that the enemy were eagerly watching the fight in front and had posted no sentries behind the grove. Clive immediately ordered a detachment to attack the battery in rear, and for a short distance accompanied its advance. On his return he found that the men in the watercourse, discouraged by his absence, were on the point of giving way, and it was with some difficulty that he was able to rally them. Soon afterwards the detachment, after narrowly escaping detection, entered the grove and delivered a volley at

thirty yards. The enemy, taken by surprise, abandoned their guns and fled, whilst the English remained under arms until daylight disclosed the completeness of the victory they had won. The army which Dupleix had raised with so much difficulty was destroyed, and the reputation of the British arms was firmly established.

Clive, after receiving the surrender of the fort at Caveripak, marched to Arcot, and next day moved towards Vellore. But whilst on the march he received orders to return to Fort St. David with his whole force and take command of an expedition for the relief of Trichinopoly. On his way to the coast he passed the rising town of Dupleix-Futtehabad, where Dupleix had planned the erection of a lofty monument, with inscriptions in various Eastern languages to commemorate the triumph of his arms. Clive, who well understood the impressionable nature of the native character, determined to remove all visible trace of French supremacy. The stately buildings were razed to the ground, and the spell of Dupleix's genius was broken when it was known that an Englishman had dared to destroy his most cherished trophies.

Three days after his arrival at Fort St. David, Clive was again ready to take the field, and he was on the point of marching when Lawrence arrived from England and assumed the command as senior officer. It was no doubt a great disappointment, but he cheerfully took service under his old chief, and remained with him throughout the operations. The gallant defence of Arcot had induced the Rajahs of Mysore and Tanjore to support Mahomed Ali, and at the close of 1751 the garrison of Trichinopoly was awaiting the arrival of the

Mysore army which was on its way from Seringapatam. A junction was effected on February 6th, 1752, after two affairs with the enemy, in one of which the English were worsted; and shortly afterwards a small force arrived from Tanjore. Captain Gingen, who commanded at Trichinopoly, was without ability and without enterprise; and the fatal spirit of division amongst the officers, to which we have already alluded, had lowered them in the estimation of the native princes. Towards the end of March the situation had become serious, and the safety of the town depended upon Lawrence's rapid advance. Dupleix, kept well informed of the movements of the English, was fully alive to the gravity of the crisis, and knew that if he could only crush the relieving column Trichinopoly would fall, and French influence be firmly re-established. He had repeatedly pressed M. Law to storm the town while Clive was at Arcot, and now he sent forward every soldier he could spare, and ordered him to mass his troops and attack Lawrence while on the march. Law decided to wait until the English column reached the vicinity of Trichinopoly, but when the time for action came he was so morbidly anxious for the safety of his camp and his communications that he divided his force instead of massing it, and lost his opportunity.

Lawrence marched from Fort St. David on March 28th, and on April 7th arrived within eighteen miles of Trichinopoly. The next day he passed within range of the guns of Koiladi fort, and on the 9th he completely outmanœuvred Law and entered the town with his convoy. On this last occasion Clive distinguished himself by seizing a large stone building on the plain, and holding the French in

check while the relieving column filed past. On the 10th Lawrence arranged with the Nawab and his allies to attack the French camp, but natives, ready and resolute as they appear to be in council, are slow and dilatory in execution. They are tied down by fasts and feasts, by lucky and unlucky days, and the opportunity is lost before they are ready to attack. Such was the case in this instance. Law became aware of the design, and on the 14th, without having been defeated in the field, and in spite of the protests of Chunda Sahib, he burned his stores and withdrew to Seringham. He committed the fatal mistake of massing his troops on an island, in the presence of a force strong enough to operate on both sides of the river. Lawrence, an experienced soldier, well tried in many a hard fight, was not the man to allow such a blunder to remain unpunished. On the 17th he ordered Clive with a picked body of troops to cross the river and take up a position that would enable him to intercept all supplies sent from Pondicherry. The selection of Clive, who was the junior captain with the force, for this service led to a remonstrance on the part of his seniors, but the question was soon settled by the refusal of the Mahrattas and native allies to serve under any other leader. The detachment crossed the two rivers before daylight and occupied the two pagodas and village of Samiaveram, ten miles from Seringham, on the high road to Pondicherry.

On the 19th Lawrence visited Clive to concert further measures, and arrangements were then made to attack the fortified pagoda of Pitchanda, which protected the passage of the river opposite Seringham. The fort of Lalgudi, in which grain for ten thousand

men for two months had been stored, was stormed on the 22nd; and, on the 26th, Clive, after leaving a small party at the pagodas, moved out to intercept D'Auteuil, who was reported to be at Uttatur with a convoy and reinforcements. On reaching Uttatur he could hear nothing of the French convoy, and, suspecting that he was the victim of a ruse to draw him from his post, he hurriedly retraced his steps and re-entered Samiaveram about 11 P.M., after having marched thirty miles since daybreak. Law, who had been informed of the march, ordered a detachment of eighty Europeans, of whom forty were English deserters, and seven hundred sepoys to march after dark and attack the pagodas at dawn. The French, unaware of Clive's return, reached Samiaveram about 4 A.M. on the 27th, and were challenged by the English sentries, who, receiving the answer "Friends" from one of the deserters, suspected nothing until the French fired a volley. Clive, springing from his bed, which was struck by a shot, ran towards the firing, and thus joined the French sepoys as they were forcing their way into the lower pagoda. Believing them to be his own men seeking shelter under the influence of a panic, he began to abuse them in their own language, when one of the native officers, suspecting him to be an Englishman, attempted to cut him down. Clive parried the blow by running in and receiving it from the hilt on his shoulder, and then, realising his mistake, disengaged himself and went in search of his European detachment, which he found drawn up under arms. Meantime the French had obtained possession of the pagoda, and in an attempt to retake it an officer and several men were killed. It was then decided to bring the guns up and wait for

daylight. When day broke the French commander attempted to cut his way out at the head of his troops, but he and the leading men were shot down, and those who escaped retired to the pagoda. Clive now "advanced into the porch of the gate to parley with the enemy, and, being weak with the loss of blood and fatigue, stood with his back to the wall of the porch, and leaned, stooping forward, on the shoulders of two sergeants. The officer of the English deserters presented himself with great insolence, and telling Captain Clive with abusive language that he would shoot him, fired his musket. The ball missed him, but went through the bodies of both the sergeants on whom he was leaning, and they both fell mortally wounded." The French within the pagoda soon afterwards surrendered; but their sepoys, who were outside, tried to escape, and were sabred to a man by the Mahratta horse. Pitchanda submitted on May 21st, and on June 8th D'Auteuil, who had been collecting stores at Volcondah, surrendered with his whole force to Clive. Law was now completely cut off from Pondicherry and had lost all hope of relief; desertions on a large scale became frequent, and on the 14th he capitulated. The same day Chunda Sahib, who had previously given himself up to the Tanjore general, was barbarously murdered in circumstances not altogether creditable to Lawrence and the English.

The surrender of Law was followed by disputes between Mahomed Ali and his allies, which were fostered by Dupleix as a means of retrieving the disaster to his arms. Mahomed Ali, who had promised Trichinopoly to the Rajah of Mysore as the price of his assistance, declined to hand the town over until

he had been placed in full possession of the Carnatic. The Mysore general insisted on the fulfilment of the agreement. The Rajah of Tanjore could not allow the town to fall into the hands of Mysore. And Morar Rao, the Mahratta chief, urged both sides to stand firm, in the hope that a quarrel might break out which would give him a chance of seizing the prize. Lawrence, after vainly pressing the native chiefs to advance on Arcot, moved northwards, and on July 18th reached Tiruvadi, where he was taken ill and obliged to hand over the command to Captain Gingen. The Governor, though temporarily deprived of his best leaders—for Clive also was ill—was unwilling to remain inactive, and determined to complete the discomfiture of the French by capturing Gingi, the only important fortress that remained in their hands. Lawrence, ill as he was, went to Madras to protest against an expedition which, without a leader of the stamp of Clive or De Bussy, was foredoomed to failure; but his opinion was overruled by Mr. Saunders, and the result was disastrous. The English were beaten, and the French, following up their success, advanced to the bounds of Fort St. David. The advantages gained by the brilliant operations round Trichinopoly were lost, and the situation became so serious that Lawrence, though still unwell, was obliged to take the field. On August 28th he left Fort St. David, and two days later defeated the French, and took Dupleix's nephew, who was in command, prisoner. The bad impression produced by the failure of the Gingi expedition was thus removed, and the Mahrattas, whose attitude had become doubtful, rejoined Lawrence, and helped him to reduce the country round Pondicherry.

The north-east monsoon was now at hand, and before it broke Governor Saunders wished to turn the French out of Covilam and Chingleput, two forts of great strength some twenty and forty miles respectively to the south of Madras. The only troops available for the attack were two hundred European recruits, the sweepings of the London jails, who had recently arrived, and five hundred untrained sepoys. Few officers would have ventured to risk their reputation by leading such men, but Clive, with that supreme self-confidence which enabled him to triumph over apparently unsurmountable obstacles, at once volunteered for the command. He left Madras with four twenty-four-pounders and a detachment so little disciplined that it fled in terror when, on taking up a position in front of Covilam, an officer was killed. He had the greatest difficulty in stopping the flight of his men, and in leading them back to the fort; and it was only by constantly exposing himself wherever the fire was hottest that he succeeded in winning their confidence and shaming them into steadiness. There is no more striking instance of the magic influence of Clive's brilliant courage and contempt for danger. The fort soon fell, and the morning it capitulated a detachment advancing to its relief was defeated. Clive followed up his success by pushing on to Chingleput, which surrendered as soon as its walls had been breached. He then returned to Madras.

The operations in the field during 1752 had on the whole been unfavourable to the French. The intrigues with the native princes, which Dupleix set on foot after the Seringham disaster, and conducted with

consummate skill, were more successful. Before the close of the year the Mahrattas had openly joined the French, and the Mysore general, to whom Seringham had been entrusted, had followed their example. On January 17th, 1753, Lawrence again took the field, but Clive's health was so completely broken that he was compelled to return to England. He embarked in February 1753, shortly after his marriage with Miss Margaret Maskelyne, sister of Dr. Nevil Maskelyne, afterwards Astronomer-Royal, and of Edmund Maskelyne, with whom he had escaped from Madras when the terms of the capitulation were ignored by Dupleix.

In this, the first period of his career, Clive had shown that he possessed, in its fullest extent, that most striking of all human qualities—true valour. He had rendered himself conspicuous by volunteering for all services of danger, and by exhibiting in them a rare combination of daring courage, sound judgment, quickness of apprehension, and readiness of resource. To personal danger he was absolutely indifferent; for death he had a lofty contempt; in sudden emergencies his presence of mind was remarkable; his heroic spirit rose superior to the depressing influences of disease; when hostilities were imminent the gloom that overshadowed his life disappeared; the din of battle, the smell of powder, steadied his nerves and cleared his head, and the excitement of action served but to increase the activity of his mind. Born with an undoubted genius for war, he never received that training which would have made him a great general. He was no consummate master of the art of war like Marlborough, Napoleon, or Wellington. There is little trace of skilful combination in his plans,

and on some occasions he appears to have neglected the most obvious military precautions. To seek the enemy and, on finding him, to attack with headlong valour seems to have been his guiding principle, and his successes were due rather to his personal intrepidity, and to his power of inspiring large masses of men with confidence, than to studied plans or dexterous manœuvres. His influence over natives was unbounded; and he possessed in an eminent degree the qualities requisite in a successful leader of native troops. No man more fully understood their character, or more completely won their confidence. His insensibility to danger and his reckless courage exerted such magic influence over their minds that they were ready to follow him in the most desperate enterprises. His men believed that wherever he went glory and victory followed; throughout India he was known as Sabat Jung (Daring in War); and it may be said of him, as it was of Napoleon, that his presence on the field of battle was equivalent to forty thousand men.

Lord Chatham once paid Clive the compliment of calling him a "heaven-born general"; and on another occasion he described him more happily as a man "whose resolution would charm the King of Prussia, and whose presence of mind has astonished the Indies." Stringer Lawrence, under whom Clive first distinguished himself, writes of the Arcot expedition in the following terms: "This expedition was attended with uncommon success, which some people were pleased to term fortunate and lucky; but, in my opinion, from the knowledge I have of the gentleman, he deserved, and might expect from his conduct, everything as it fell out. A man of an undaunted resolution, of a cool temper, and a presence of mind

which never left him in the greatest danger. Born a soldier, for without a military education of any sort, or much conversing with any of the profession, from his judgment and good sense, he led an army like an experienced officer and a brave soldier, with a prudence that certainly warranted success. This young man's early genius surprised and engaged my attention as well before as at the siege of Devicotta, where he behaved in courage and judgment much beyond what could be expected from his years, and his success afterwards confirmed what I had said to many people concerning him."

In considering this period of Clive's career it should not be forgotten that Dupleix was the first to conceive the brilliant idea of Indian Empire, and that the French first made the three capital discoveries for the conquest of India—that native armies were unable to resist the disciplined troops of Europe; that European discipline could be readily imparted to natives; and that, in Asiatic warfare, the true way to victory is to attack boldly and without hesitation. To the young English clerk belongs the glory of having made those discoveries his own, and of having applied them with a cool self-confidence that commanded success. His brilliant defence of Arcot saved the Company's settlements on the Coromandel coast from destruction, and taught the wild Mahratta horsemen, no less than the native levies and allies of Dupleix, that the English could fight. It was the turning-point of the fortunes of the English in India. His victory at Caveripak and his destruction of Dupleix's trophies, broke the spell of French invincibility, and showed the natives that the crisis had brought forth

an Englishman who was not only able but ready to dispute the extravagant claims of the French governor. Unfortunately there is no correspondence to throw light on the motives that guided Clive's conduct during this period of his life. He was determined to advance by merit and not by interest; and he was apparently animated by a sincere determination to promote the welfare of the Company and by an ardent desire for distinction. In some sense he seems to have looked upon himself as an instrument of the Divine Will. Speaking long afterwards in the House of Commons he is reported to have said: "In this critical situation I was called forth, and it pleased God to make me the instrument of their (the Company's) delivery." It was indeed patent to every one that British interests in India had been saved from destruction by the genius and energy of one man, and the "hero of Arcot," on reaching England, was received with those flattering marks of regard which are so freely offered to the successful soldier. The fame of his exploits had preceded him. His father, who, on first hearing of his son's success, had remarked that "the booby had some sense after all," had lost no opportunity of sounding his praises. His brave conduct and his success were the talk and wonder of the public; and, in the conversation of the day, he was compared to the great generals of former times. The Court of Directors had written to the Governor of Fort St. David of "the great regard" they had "for the merit of Captain Clive, to whose courage and conduct the late turn in our affairs has been mainly owing; he may be assured of our having a just sense of his services." They had

toasted him at their banquets as "General" Clive; and, after his return to England they voted him a diamond-hilted sword, worth £500, "as a token of their esteem, and of his singular services to the Company on the coast of Coromandel." With rare good taste and feeling he declined this last distinction unless a similar honour were conferred upon his master in the art of war—Stringer Lawrence.

Clive had brought home a fair fortune, and his first use of it was to clear off the encumbrances on the family estate and pay his father's debts. He was, however, soon carried away by the attention paid to him in society, and, partly from vanity, partly from ambition, led a life of extravagance far beyond his means. His dress, his liveries, his carriages and his horses were brilliant and costly even for those times; and his outlay on these luxuries, combined with the expense of a contested election followed by a petition, nearly involved him in pecuniary difficulties. While Clive's name was in every mouth, Henry Pelham, who had been almost uninterruptedly Prime Minister since the fall of Walpole, died, and was succeeded in the Government by the Duke of Newcastle. On April 8th, 1754, Parliament was dissolved, and in the elections that followed—those rendered memorable by the pictures of Hogarth—Clive stood for the borough of St. Michael's in Cornwall, which then returned two members. Newcastle hoped to secure the return of both, but he was opposed by Lord Sandwich and Fox. Clive, who had attracted the favourable notice of Fox, was brought forward in the Sandwich interest, and, thanks to a large expenditure of money, was returned. A petition was presented

against his return, and the case was brought before a Committee of the whole House. A fierce party contest ensued, which was rather a trial of strength between the parties of Newcastle and Fox in the new House of Commons than an impartial examination into the merits of the election. The Committee decided in favour of Clive, but, when the resolution was reported, the Tories, who hated Fox more than they despised Newcastle, voted with the Government and Clive was unseated. He was greatly disappointed; he could no longer look forward to a political career in England; the fashionable life he had been leading was impossible with straitened means, and his thoughts naturally turned towards India, where another fortune might be readily acquired. He applied for employment, and the Company and the Government eagerly availed themselves of his services.

CHAPTER V

THE WAR IN BENGAL

THE aspect of foreign affairs was threatening; Europe was arming for the gigantic struggle which was to be known in history as the Seven Years' War; and an early rupture was expected between England and France. The colonists of the two countries had commenced fighting in America; and it was manifest that, if war broke out in Europe, it would soon extend to India. The Directors of the East India Company, foreseeing the coming storm, determined to strengthen their position in the Carnatic and to destroy French influence in the Deccan. They appointed Clive to Fort St. David, and, to avoid any disputes about rank, they obtained for him a commission as Lieutenant-Colonel in the King's army. They intended that Clive, before proceeding to his government, should assemble a force at Bombay, and in conjunction with the Mahrattas attack the French and their allies in the Deccan. When, however, the expedition was planned, the Duke of Cumberland insisted that Colonel Scott, who had gone out to India in the previous year as chief engineer, should have the command. Clive wished, in consequence, to sail direct to Fort St. David; but the Directors, hoping

that some fortunate accident might throw the command into his hands, directed him, in the first instance, to proceed to Bombay. He landed in November 1755, and finding that Colonel Scott was dead, at once assumed the command. But the Bombay Government, considering itself bound by the Provisional Treaty of Madras, would not sanction the proposed expedition, and it was abandoned.

Clive was again in India, where, meantime, great changes had taken place. The year that followed his departure from Madras is memorable for the Homeric combats between the English and French beneath the walls of Trichinopoly. The struggle was unequal, for the English were always inferior in number; and their native allies, half tempted by the promises of Dupleix, gave them but uncertain support. In the Trichinopoly campaign of 1753-54 Lawrence and his grenadiers covered themselves with glory. The English leader triumphed over every obstacle; in the darkest days he never despaired of success; and for more than a year he maintained his hold upon the historic rock in the face of an active and enterprising enemy. In January 1754 peace negotiations were opened between Madras and Pondicherry, but the real question at issue between the two Companies was never approached, and after much fruitless discussion the conferences were abandoned. Hostilities recommenced, and were carried on with varying success until August 1st, when the supersession of Dupleix by M. Godeheu completely altered the relations between the English and the French in Southern India. The greatest Frenchman of his generation, the virtual ruler of an Empire larger than

France herself, was recalled from the scene of his triumphs, and treated by the nation to which he had brought so much glory as if he had been the vilest of mankind. Dupleix left Pondicherry on October 14th, 1754, and died ten years later in Paris in great distress, after having lived to see England occupying the position in India which he had hoped to secure for France.

M. Godeheu, who was ready to sacrifice everything for peace, at once communicated with Mr. Saunders, and the two governors agreed to a suspension of arms pending negotiations. A three months' truce was concluded, and this was followed by the signature of a Provisional Treaty, under which the new French governor surrendered everything for which Dupleix had fought. By a separate convention, signed the same day, the truce was extended until it was known whether England and France would accept the treaty. The truce was badly kept on both sides. The English, early in February 1755, assisted Mahomed Ali to reduce Madura and Tinivelly; and the French sent a force to collect rents for the Rajah of Mysore. Ten days after M. Godeheu landed at Pondicherry Admiral Watson's squadron, with Adlercron's regiment, reached Fort St. David; and the anxiety of the French governor to conclude peace may have been due to the fact that the English were now in superior force on the coast. In the Deccan the French, under the celebrated De Bussy, had become absolute masters of the situation. The Northern Circars, which yielded an annual revenue of £400,000, had been made over to them for the support of their army: a French guard protected the person of the Subadar; and De Bussy, through a native minister,

ruled the destinies of the State. The recall of Dupleix had, it is true, weakened the French position at Aurungabad; but at the end of 1755 there was little to indicate the change that had taken place in the feeling of the Moslem nobility.

Such was the condition of affairs when Clive reached Bombay. Watson arrived a few days later from Madras; and it was then decided to attack Gheriah, the headquarters of Angria, a pirate chief whose armed cruisers interrupted the commerce between Europe and India. Before the expedition sailed, a council of war was held to settle the distribution of the prize-money. The spirit of plunder was strong in all ranks, and the ill-defined relations between the King's and the Company's troops rendered such councils necessary to prevent quarrels over the spoil. On the present occasion, after it had been unanimously agreed that the Mahrattas, who were to take part in the expedition, should receive nothing, a serious dispute arose with regard to Clive's share. The officers of the army urged that he should at least rank with Admiral Pocock, Watson's second in command; the naval officers insisted that he should only receive the share of a post-captain. Watson refused to admit the claim of the army officers, but satisfied them by promising to make Clive's share equal to Pocock's by a contribution from his own. When the fort was captured he sent Clive about £1000, which the latter returned with a message to the effect that, though obliged to maintain his rights as Commander of the Land Forces, he would "never enrich himself with money taken from Mr. Watson's personal share of the capture." On February 12th the English fleet sailed into the harbour,

and, after a sharp action, set fire to and completely destroyed the pirate fleet. Clive and the troops were then landed; and next day, after the ships had re-opened fire, the fort surrendered. After this expedition the squadron conveyed Clive to Fort St. David, and then went on to Madras, where Mr. Pigot, who had succeeded Mr. Saunders as governor, was preparing to take advantage of the check which the French had experienced in the Deccan.

In 1633, the year after Shah Jahan had destroyed the Portuguese settlement at Hooghly, the English obtained permission to trade in Bengal. Some years later the palace at Agra was in commotion; the clothes of the Padishah's favourite daughter had caught fire, and the injuries were so serious that messengers were sent to Surat to secure the services of a Frank physician. Dr. Boughton, the physician selected, succeeded in curing the princess, and received as his fee a firman granting the Company permission to trade free of duty in Bengal. His good fortune followed him to that province, where he won the lasting gratitude of the Subadar by attending one of the ladies of the *zenana*. The prince, at his request, allowed the Company to build a factory at Hooghly, and to establish agencies at Patna, Kasimbazar, Dacca, and Balasor. Such was the origin of the first British settlement in Bengal. Early in 1689 Mr. Job Charnock, then Governor of "the Bay," was obliged to withdraw to Madras; but in the following year he returned and established an English factory at Chatanati, whence was to spring Calcutta, "the City of Palaces." During the Hindu rebellion against Aurungzebe in 1696 the European settlers obtained

permission to defend themselves; and the English, French, and Dutch surrounded their factories with massive walls flanked by bastions. A little later the English purchased the *zamindari* of Chatanati, Govindpore, and Calicota; and acquired a position in Bengal similar to that which they already occupied in Madras.

In 1742 Ali Vardi Khan, Governor of Behar, taking advantage of the loosening of all authority after the sack of Delhi by Nadir Shah, made himself master of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, and secured himself in his position by a suitable present to the Padishah. He had scarcely seated himself on the *musnud* when the Mahrattas raided the province. From 1742 to 1750 there was an annual invasion; the markets were deserted, the lands untilled, the peasants escaped to the jungle, and the wealthier classes sought safety behind the walls of the European settlements. Calcutta, where the memory of these raids was long preserved by the Mahratta ditch, was never attacked; and in spite of its unhealthy situation it throve during the time of trouble. It had a population of over two hundred thousand, the factory with its warehouses and offices covered one hundred acres of ground, and the native villages were gradually widening into a city. A governor and council reigned supreme within the Company's bounds; and an English *zamindar*, with the aid of whip, prison, and fine, administered justice to and collected taxes from the natives. The Company's servants made large profits by their private trade. They engaged in ventures into the eastern seas, and accepted commissions and presents from the native merchants. The acquisition of wealth was the all-absorbing object of life, and there was

much extravagance and some excess. The natives lived apart in their villages; their rites and ceremonies had not yet been modified by contact with European civilisation, and all the horrors and follies of Hinduism might be witnessed within musket-shot of Fort William.

The great plain of Bengal, at whose eastern extremity the English had settled, is one of the most fertile regions of the earth. Watered by the sacred Ganges and by numberless rivers and canals, and tilled by a teeming population, it yields every variety of produce in abundance; its cities are wealthy, and light craft are counted by the thousand in its ports and on its streams. The western district was once thickly studded with industrial cities: trade and industry had been attracted by a succession of imperial capitals; and the most cunning craftsmen of Asia toiled to gratify the whims or supply the wants of a long line of despotic sovereigns. The eastern region was essentially agricultural. The peasants lived in villages half concealed by a wealth of tropical foliage, while the merchants and the governing classes drew together in large towns. It was extremely productive; the imperial share of the revenue of Bengal was £550,000 after all charges had been defrayed, and every one, from the Subadar downwards, had enriched himself. In the middle of the eighteenth century Patna produced raw silk, saltpetre, and sufficient opium to supply the whole of India. Moorshedabad had a population of two hundred thousand, possessed a mint, and was thirty miles in circumference. Dacca, long the military capital of Lower Bengal, was famous for its cotton and silk, for the quantity and cheapness of its provisions, and for the galleys and boats that were built on the banks of the

sacred river. Hooghly, the sole port of entry, loaded each year fifty or sixty ships for Europe, and conducted a large local and coasting trade. In the unhealthy eastern delta, where earth and water seem ever striving for mastery, the scattered villages provided cotton cloths, silk handkerchiefs, rice and sugar. The picture had, however, its darker side. Nowhere in the world are atmospheric disturbances attended with more disastrous results. A failure or deficiency in the annual rains imperils the lives of millions. The track of an Indian cyclone is marked by ruined houses and buried communities. At night a cyclonic wave sweeps over the smiling plain, and in the morning nothing is to be seen but festering corpses and a wasted country.

After the cessation of the Mahratta incursions in 1750, the English lived a life of ease and security; but, on April 9th, 1756, the firm rule of Ali Vardi came to an end, and his grand-nephew, Surajah Dowlah, ruled in his stead. The prince, who was twenty-five years old, had been brought up from his cradle as a spoiled child, and as he grew in years he had given way to all kinds of debauchery. His understanding was feeble, his temper uncertain, his habits effeminate; he had no experience in administration, and his companions were chosen from the lowest class. Shortly after his accession the English irritated him by refusing to surrender one of his subjects, and by strengthening the fortifications of Calcutta, and in a paroxysm of rage he vowed that he would drive them into the sea. On June 4th he seized and plundered the factory at Kasimbazar, where young Warren Hastings was serving as a writer in the Company's service; and on the 15th he

appeared before Calcutta with a large army. The works of Fort William were weak, the garrison had little training in the use of arms, the supply of ammunition was insufficient, and no succour could be expected from far-distant Madras and Bombay. The governor applied to the Dutch and the French for assistance. From the former he received an unqualified refusal, from the latter an offer of shelter behind the ramparts of Chandernagore. Within the walls of Fort William disorder and confusion reigned supreme; the leaders thought of nothing but their own safety, and all authority was at an end. On the 18th the women and children were removed to vessels lying in the river. In the evening of the same day Mr. Drake, the governor, and Captain Minchin, the commandant, lost to all sense of shame, fled to the ships, and, dropping down the river, abandoned their comrades to their fate. Mr. Holwell, a member of Council, assumed the command and defended the fort with courage and spirit, but on the 20th the gates were forced and the place was lost. From daylight on Sunday till late in the afternoon of Monday the deserted garrison signalled to the ships for assistance. A few boats might have rescued all who remained, yet the governor and the commandant made no effort to save their countrymen. There is no more disgraceful incident in the history of the British Empire. At 6 P.M. the fort was in the hands of the Nawab, and two hours later one hundred and forty-six prisoners were marched into the "Black Hole" of Calcutta, a long, low, oven-like chamber, in which military prisoners were confined. A night of unspeakable horror followed, and early next morning twenty-three survivors were led or

carried forth by the guard. The bodies of the dead were thrown into the ditch of the ravelin. Surajah Dowlah does not appear to have been directly responsible for the death of the prisoners—that was due to the brutality or thoughtlessness of his soldiers. But he never expressed any regret, and his conduct towards the survivors showed that he was indifferent to their sufferings.

The tragedy enacted at Calcutta was known at Madras on August 16th; and on the 18th the Governor sent for Clive, who, on hearing of the capture of Kasimbazar, had volunteered for service in Bengal. The Council had been in communication with Colonel Adlercron, who as senior officer claimed the command if a force were sent, but he would neither promise to obey orders from Madras nor to repay the Company's losses out of the expected loot. They therefore resolved, at the suggestion of Orme and Lawrence, to entrust the expedition to Clive. Adlercron hereupon refused to allow any of the King's troops to proceed to Bengal, and ordered all men, guns, and stores to be disembarked, with the exception of two hundred and fifty men under Captain, afterwards Sir, Eyre Coote, who were permitted to serve as marines on the admiral's flagship. A discussion next arose between the Council and Watson with regard to the future government of the Bengal settlements in case of success. The Council proposed that they should assume the government until instructions arrived from England. Watson positively refused to undertake the expedition if the settlement were not restored to the survivors of the governing body appointed by the Company, and the Council were obliged to give way.

Clive and Watson were instructed to recover Calcutta, to attack the Nawab in his capital, if they deemed it necessary; and in the event of war between England and France to capture Chandernagore. It was also arranged that they should seize Dacca, and divide the plunder amongst the Calcutta sufferers. The Government of Madras appointed Clive Commander-in-Chief in Bengal, with complete military and political control over the expedition, and supplied him with such funds as he required. He was only to acknowledge Mr. Drake as governor in civil and commercial affairs. At the time the expedition sailed news had reached Madras that war with France was imminent, and that the French were going to send a large fleet with three thousand soldiers to Pondicherry. Clive was in consequence ordered to return with all the troops in April. The firmness and decision with which Clive met the difficulties inherent to the conduct of an expedition organised and undertaken in the circumstances described above will appear in the sequel; his letters, written a few days before he left Madras, are full of confidence. "I flatter myself," he writes to the Directors, "that this expedition will not end with the taking of Calcutta only, and that the Company's estate in those parts will be settled in a better and more lasting condition than ever. There is less reason to apprehend a check from the Nawab's forces than from the nature of the climate and country. The news of a war may likewise interfere with the success of this expedition; however, should that happen, and hostilities be committed in India, I hope we shall be able to dispossess the French of Chandernagore, and leave Calcutta in a state of defence."

After two months had been wasted in disputes about the command, the squadron sailed on October 16th with nine hundred Europeans, including those serving as marines, and twelve hundred sepoys. A few days later a council of war was held to settle the distribution of the expected prize-money. The naval officers wished to follow the Gheriah precedent, but Clive insisted upon an equal distribution between the army and navy, and carried his point. The ships had to contend against the full force of the monsoon, and the voyage was unusually long and difficult. The rice for the sepoys failed, and many of them preferred death by famine to pollution by eating pork and beef. The fire-ship was driven to Ceylon; the *Marlborough*, with most of the artillery, parted company; and the *Cumberland*, with Admiral Pocock and two hundred and fifty European soldiers, fell to leeward and sailed for Vizagapatam. At Falta, near the mouth of the Hooghly, Watson and Clive found Major Kilpatrick, who had arrived from Madras in the previous August, and the refugees from Calcutta. For five months they had been crowded together, some in wretched hovels on shore, others on the ships. Want of proper food and clothing, and exposure to the fierce rays of the sun in a deadly climate, had rendered the condition of men and women alike deplorable. The mortality was appalling. Kilpatrick had landed with two hundred and forty men; all had succumbed but thirty, and of these only ten were fit for duty.

On December 17th Watson and Clive wrote in peremptory terms to Surajah Dowlah to demand redress for the losses sustained by the Company, and after vainly waiting for an answer declared war. Operations were com-

menced by an attack on Baj Baj, a small strong fort on the left bank of the Hooghly, about ten miles below Calcutta. Clive wished to convey the troops to the point of attack by water, but Watson insisted upon landing them at Moidapore. The force marched all night, through a low swampy country covered with jungle, and reached the vicinity of Baj Baj in the morning in an exhausted condition. Two hours after its arrival it was attacked by Manik Chund, the Governor of Calcutta. The attack was a surprise; the men were lying down after their sixteen hours' march, no sentries were posted, and disaster was only averted by Clive's presence of mind and determined courage. The English, fighting at a disadvantage, suffered heavy loss, and the action was not decided until a lucky shot went through Manik Chund's turban and prompted a retreat. Clive has been justly blamed for not taking the most ordinary precautions to guard against surprise. Watson must equally be blamed for risking the success of the enterprise by landing Clive and the Company's troops at Moidapore. In the evening one of those incidents which sometimes occur in wars of this nature gave Clive the fort without firing another shot. A drunken sailor crossed the ditch, and, scrambling over the parapet, shouted that he had taken the place. He was quickly joined by the advanced guard, and it was then discovered that the enemy had evacuated the fort and gone off towards Calcutta.

You must know (Clive writes to Pigot) our march from Moidapore to the northward of Baj Baj was much against my inclinations. I applied to the Admiral for boats to land us at the place we arrived at after sixteen hours' march by

land. The men suffered hardships not to be described: it was four in the afternoon when we decamped from Moidapore, and we did not arrive off Baj Baj till past eight next morning; at nine the grenadier company and all the sepoys were despatched to the fort, where I heard Captain Coote was landed with the King's troops. At ten Manik Chund, the Governor of Calcutta, attacked us with between two and three thousand horse and foot, and was worsted. . . . Our two field-pieces were of little or no service to us, having neither tubes nor portfires, and wrong carriages sent with them from Fort St. David. . . . It seems the enemy were encamped within two miles of us, and we ignorant of the matter; so much for the intelligence of the country.

On January 2nd, 1757, Calcutta surrendered to Watson, who sent Captain King, R.N., to take possession for the Crown, and appointed Eyre Coote governor. Clive entered the fort soon afterwards with the Company's troops. When shown Coote's commission he refused to recognise the admiral's authority to appoint a junior officer governor, claimed the right to command on shore by virtue of his royal commission as lieutenant-colonel, and declared that he would place Coote under arrest if his orders were disobeyed. Watson threatened to fire upon the fort if Clive did not abandon it. Clive replied that he would not surrender his command to a subordinate, and that, if the fleet opened fire, he would not answer for the consequences. In the end Clive surrendered the fort to Watson in person, and the admiral immediately handed it over to the same Mr. Drake who had behaved so disgracefully when the town was besieged. Clive's firmness was never exerted to better purpose. It was absolutely necessary to success that he should have supreme command on shore, and that the pretensions of Watson to interfere with the land opera-

tions and take possession of all conquests for the King should be resisted. Watson was a thorough sailor—brave, generous, humane, and incapable of acting from unworthy motives. But he had a high sense of the dignity of his position as senior officer of the King's service, and a warm temper which the climate had not improved. On two occasions he had carried his point, and on both his judgment was wrong. He had restored Calcutta to an incompetent governor, and had obliged Clive to make the harassing march which so nearly ended in disaster at Baj Baj. Clive, who kept his temper throughout, gave vent to his indignation in his letters.

I cannot help regretting (he again writes to Pigot) that ever I undertook this expedition. The mortifications I have received from Mr. Watson and the gentlemen of the squadron, in point of prerogative, are such that nothing but the good of the Service could induce me to submit to them. The morning the enemy quitted Calcutta a party of our sepoys entered the fort at the same time with a detachment from the ships and were ignominiously thrust out. Upon coming near the fort myself I was informed that there were orders that none of the Company's officers or troops should have entrance. This, I own, enraged me to such a degree that I was resolved to enter if possible; which I did, though not in the manner maliciously reported, by forcing the sentries, for they suffered us to pass very patiently upon being informed who I was. At my entrance Captain Coote presented me with a commission from Admiral Watson, appointing him Governor of Fort William, which I knew not a syllable of before; and it seems this dirty underhand contrivance was carried on in the most secret manner, under a pretence that I intended the same thing, which, I declare, never entered my thoughts.

The two commanders, who had received no answer to their letters from the Nawab, now decided to press

the war vigorously. Hooghly, the first point selected for attack, was captured with slight loss, and the troops, after destroying large stores of rice and grain collected for the use of the Nawab's army, returned to Calcutta. An expedition against Dacca was next planned, and the necessary preparations were in progress when news arrived that Surajah Dowlah was marching down with a large army. During the expedition to Hooghly Clive heard that England and France were at war, and shortly afterwards he received letters from the Madras Government suggesting an attack on Chandernagore, and directing him to return as soon as possible with all available troops. His position was one of great difficulty. Presidential jealousies and the antagonism between the troops of the Crown and those of the Company were then, as at a later period, a fertile source of friction. The Governor and Council at Calcutta cared little for the Company and much for their own losses. Clive was a Madras man—an unpardonable offence in their eyes. They called upon him to surrender the independent powers with which he had been invested, and did all they could to prejudice Watson against him. For such men Clive could feel nothing but contempt, and he freely expresses his opinion of them in a letter to Mr. Pigot. "I am sorry to say the loss of private property, and the means of recovering it, seem to be the only objects which take up the attention of the Bengal gentlemen. . . . Believe me, they are bad subjects and rotten at heart, and will stick at nothing to prejudice you and the gentlemen of the committee; indeed, how should they do otherwise, when they have not spared one another? I shall only add, their conduct at Calcutta finds no excuse, even

among themselves, and that the riches of Peru and Mexico should not induce me to dwell among them."

When the advance of the Nawab was known it was fully expected that the French at Chandernagore would join him in an attack upon Calcutta. Clive, who was then entrenched in a strong position to the north of the town, realised that the safety of the British settlements in Bengal depended upon his action; and he used the great powers entrusted to him with a prudence and caution little expected by those who knew his daring spirit. He endeavoured to open negotiations with Surajah Dowlah, and when that prince, on reaching Hooghly, expressed his readiness to restore the Company's property and give compensation, he strongly advised the Bengal Government to accept the conditions. Whilst Clive was attempting to negotiate with the Nawab in the name of the Company, Watson was threatening him with fire and sword in the name of the King. What Surajah Dowlah thought of this dual correspondence we are not told; it must have led to grave complications if the English commanders had not placed the good of the public service above every private consideration. The estrangement between Dupleix and La Bourdonnais was fatal to their schemes; the service jealousies and rivalries of Clive and Watson disappeared in the face of a common foe.

On February 3rd, while Watson was dining in camp with Clive, the advanced guard of the Nawab's army was descried marching in the direction of Calcutta. Clive opened fire with two field-pieces, but darkness soon put an end to the cannonade. Next morning the Nawab requested that deputies might be sent to him to

negotiate a peace, and his army, continuing its march, encamped between the English army and Calcutta. The deputies, Messrs. Walsh and Scrafton, found on reaching the appointed place of meeting that the Nawab had followed his army and established his headquarters in Omichund's garden within the Mahratta ditch. Surajah Dowlah received them in full *durbar* at 7 P.M., treated them with haughtiness and disrespect, and directed them to discuss details with his ministers. As they were leaving the *durbar* they received a hint to take care of themselves; and, knowing the treacherous character of the Nawab, they put out their lights and made their way to the English camp. The wholesale desertion of the workmen, coolies, and servants, and the breaking-up of the bazaar on the approach of the Nawab had left the English army dependent upon the fort for its supplies; and the failure of the peace negotiations now rendered a battle necessary. The deputies reached the camp at 11 P.M., and Clive, after hearing their report, determined to attack before daylight. By midnight he was on board the flagship demanding assistance from Watson, which was readily granted; and at 3 A.M. the troops were ready to march. The English force consisted of five hundred and seventy sailors, seven hundred and eighty Europeans, eight hundred sepoys, and seven field-pieces; the Nawab's of forty thousand men, including eighteen thousand cavalry, forty guns, and fifty elephants. Clive's plan was to attack the artillery park; and after spiking the guns to push on to the headquarters of the Nawab. The head of the column entered the enemy's camp under cover of a dense fog, about 6 A.M., and at first carried all before it. When opposite Omichund's garden

the English heard the sound of cavalry in motion, and a momentary lift in the fog disclosed a long line of horsemen charging down upon their flank. The men halted mechanically and delivered their fire with crushing effect. The horsemen melted away, and, had the fog then dispersed, as it usually did at that hour, the action would have been decisive. Unfortunately the fog settled down thicker than ever, and the column getting into confusion, missed its way and came under the fire of its own guns and those of the fort. When it lifted the English were attacked in front and rear, and their position became critical. The emergency was one in which Clive's genius shone brightest; he rallied his men, dragged his guns through the mire of the rice-fields, and entered Calcutta about noon. His aide-de-camp and secretary were killed by his side, and his losses were heavy; but the men, though exhausted, were not dispirited. By 5 P.M. the column had returned to camp, and was hanging, like a heavy thunder-cloud, ready to burst, on the skirts of the Nawab's army.

The attack, though it failed in its main object, terrified the Nawab, who next day moved out into the open plain and expressed his readiness to negotiate. Watson doubted his sincerity, and urged Clive to renew the attack. But the latter was afraid of driving him into the arms of the French, and believed that he was so alarmed that he really wished for peace. The negotiations resulted in a treaty, signed on the 9th, under which Surajah Dowlah engaged to confirm the ancient privileges of the Company, to restore their factories, make good their losses by the war, allow them to fortify Calcutta and establish a mint there, and to

permit goods with their *dustuck*[1] to pass free of duty. Three days later Clive and Watson entered into an offensive and defensive alliance with the Nawab, and Mr. Watts was appointed to reside with him as political agent. But Surajah Dowlah had no sooner attached his seal to the treaty than he commenced corresponding with the French, and devising plans for the expulsion of his new friends. The treaty, which appears to have been concluded with undue haste, simply placed both sides in the position they occupied before the war. It made no provision against a renewal of hostilities by the Nawab, or against an attack by the French, and it left the outrage of the Black Hole unpunished. Clive himself, in a letter to Mr. Payne, remarks :—

> If I had only consulted the interest and reputation of a soldier, the conclusion of this peace might easily have been suspended. I know, at the same time, there are many who think I have been too precipitate in the conclusion of it; but surely those who are of this opinion never knew that the delay of a day or two might have ruined the Company's affairs by the junction of the French with the Nawab, which was on the point of being carried into execution. They never considered the situation of affairs on the coast, and the positive orders sent me by the gentlemen there to return with the major part of the forces at all events ; they never considered that, with a war upon the coast and in the province of Bengal at the same time, a trading company could not subsist without a great assistance from the Government.

The native difficulty having been brought to a successful conclusion, the question of attacking the French settlement at Chandernagore was next considered. Clive's position was one of great difficulty. England and France were at war, and it was known

[1] A pass or permit granted by the Company's servants.

that the latter was determined to make a vigorous effort to regain the position she had lost in the Carnatic. Clive had received repeated orders to return to Madras, and he was sincerely desirous to do so, but he knew that if he left the government of Chandernagore unfettered behind him, the English settlements would soon be wrested from the feeble hands of Mr. Drake. All the advantages gained by the expedition would then be lost. The capture of Chandernagore would, on the other hand, secure the English in Bengal from the attack of any European enemy; and there was ample time to take the place and leave Calcutta before the monsoon broke. Clive, however, had reason to fear that the French would join the Nawab in an attempt to crush the English; and he was unwilling to risk the chances of a fight with their combined forces. From the first he frankly stated his opinion that the choice lay between an immediate attack on Chandernagore and an armistice with the French, and he warned the government of Fort William that if they adopted the former alternative, war with Surajah Dowlah would follow. "If," he wrote, "you attack Chandernagore, you cannot stop there, you must go farther. Having established yourselves by force, and not by the consent of the Nawab, he by force will endeavour to drive you out again." These considerations, and a personal dislike to service in Bengal, induced Clive to favour the conclusion of a treaty of neutrality with the French.

After the recapture of Calcutta, the Governor of Chandernagore proposed that the neutrality which had always existed between the two countries in Bengal should be formally confirmed. But the English insisted

that the French should make common cause with them against Surajah Dowlah, and the negotiations were broken off. They were resumed after Clive had made peace with the Nawab, and terms satisfactory to both parties, which were to be guaranteed by Surajah Dowlah, were drawn out for signature. When, however, the treaty was submitted to Admiral Watson, he refused to sign on the plea that it had not received the sanction of the Governor of Pondicherry. He argued rightly that as the Governor of Chandernagore had no independent powers, any treaty signed by him would leave De Bussy and other French commanders complete freedom of action. He also expressed distrust of the Nawab, who had not carried out one article of his treaty with Clive, and urged that instead of asking him to guarantee a treaty they should treat him as an enemy if he did not fulfil his engagements in ten days' time. Clive was indignant at the little regard shown by Watson for the promises made by himself and his colleagues to the French and the Nawab. He pointed out that before an answer could be received from Pondicherry the monsoon would break and render the departure of the English troops for Madras impossible; and he insisted that, if the treaty were not signed, an immediate attack should be made on Chandernagore. At this juncture Watson opportunely heard of the arrival of Admiral Pocock with the *Cumberland* at the mouth of the Hooghly, and received official intelligence of the war with France. He now wrote that he looked upon the declaration of war as an order for all officers to distress the enemy, and that he only wanted an assurance that hostilities

would not be prejudicial to the Company's interests. The action taken by the Secret Committee on receipt of Watson's letter was afterwards described by Clive in the following terms: "Mr. Becher gave his opinion for a neutrality, Major Kilpatrick for a neutrality, Clive himself gave his opinion for the attack of the place, Mr. Drake gave an opinion that nobody could make anything of. Major Kilpatrick then asked him whether he thought the forces and squadron could attack Chandernagore and the Nawab's army at the same time? He said he thought they could; upon which Major Kilpatrick desired to withdraw his opinion and to be of his. They voted Mr. Drake's no opinion at all, and Major Kilpatrick and he being the majority, a letter was written to Admiral Watson desiring him to co-operate in an attack on Chandernagore."

Clive and Watson did not wish to commence operations without the consent of the Nawab. When Mr. Watts was sent to Moorshedabad, he was instructed to obtain permission to attack Chandernagore, and negotiations ensued, not unlike those between the French and Anwar-ud-din which preceded the capture of Madras in 1746. He was at first unsuccessful. Surajah Dowlah was sending money and troops to the governor, and urging De Bussy to come to his assistance; and he met the English request to attack by a distinct refusal. "It has never been known," he wrote, "since the days of Timour, that the Europeans made war upon one another within the King's dominions. If you are determined to besiege the French factories, I shall be necessitated in honour and duty to my King to assist them with my troops." Early in March, however, he heard that

Ahmed Shah Durani, who had captured Delhi, was marching on Bengal, and he asked Clive to assist him with troops. On the 10th of the same month, being still under the influence of his fears, Surajah Dowlah told Mr. Watts that if the English attacked Chandernagore he would not interfere, and wrote to Watson, "You have understanding and generosity; if your enemy with an upright heart claims your protection, you will give him his life, but then you must be well satisfied of the innocence of his intentions; if not, whatever you think right, that do." This letter, obtained, it is said, by bribing the Nawab's secretary, was received on the 13th, and the same day Clive, who had moved up from Calcutta, summoned the French to surrender. Chandernagore was defended by a square bastioned fort mounting over eighty guns, well supplied with military stores, and protected, on the land side, by a dry ditch and *glacis.* Batteries had been thrown up to command all approaches by land and water, and ships had been sunk to obstruct the navigation of the Hooghly. The garrison consisted of "more than five hundred Europeans and seven hundred blacks, all carrying arms." On March 14th Clive drove the French out of their advanced batteries, and on the 23rd the garrison surrendered to Watson, who had brought his ships up through an opening in the closed channel that had been disclosed to him by a French deserter. The English ships were anchored so close to the fort that the musket-balls fired from their tops were flattened against the walls of the governor's palace, and the loss on both sides was heavy. The Admiral's flagship was hulled more than a hundred times, and every officer but one was killed or wounded.

After the fall of Chandernagore Watson returned with the squadron to Calcutta, while Clive remained to watch a large force which the Nawab had assembled in an entrenched camp at Plassey. Clive, though he considered Madras safe in the hands of Pigot and Lawrence, and looked upon the capture of Chandernagore as of more consequence than that of Pondicherry, was anxious to return to the coast. He was, however, the only man in Bengal capable of maintaining the position that had been won, and he was compelled to remain by circumstances beyond his control. To have withdrawn at this moment would have been to sacrifice all the advantages gained. The sincerity of Surajah Dowlah's professions of friendship was doubtful; his power was unbroken, and a junction between his forces and those of De Bussy, who was reported to be marching on Bengal, would have been fatal to British interests. The danger of such a combination was no imaginary one. During the critical months following the receipt of news that England and France were at war, De Bussy had it in his power, had he so willed, to play a far more important part than he had hitherto done in Indian affairs. He was at the head of a well-tried force of Europeans and sepoys. His military reputation and the *prestige* of French arms had been greatly increased by his heroic defence of the Char Mahal, and he occupied a commanding position. De Bussy might with equal ease have joined Surajah Dowlah and crushed Clive in Bengal, or have moved into the Carnatic and compelled the attenuated garrisons of Fort St. David and Madras to sue for terms. It is clear that Clive and Pigot expected him to take an active part in the campaign, and his

movements were no less a source of anxiety at Fort St. George than at Calcutta.

If De Bussy was inactive, Clive was the reverse. He had not forgotten the ambitious schemes of Dupleix, and the struggle for mastery in the Carnatic; and he had grasped the fact that England and France could not co-exist as political powers in India. He had at first been unwilling to commit himself to hostilities against the French; but, the sword having once been drawn, he was determined not to stay his hand until every Frenchman had been driven from Bengal. The Nawab, who, during the siege of Chandernagore had alternately threatened and courted the President, Mr. Watts, disguised his chagrin at its fall by outward demonstrations of joy, and congratulated Clive and Watson on their victory. At the same time he secretly took M. Law and the French soldiers who had escaped from Chandernagore into his service, and renewed his application to De Bussy for assistance. When the English commanders protested, he supplied Law with money, ammunition, and transport, and sent him to Patna. This action drew an angry threat from the Admiral, that "while a Frenchman remained in the country he would never cease pursuing him." It was his last letter to the Nawab, for a dual correspondence would have been fatal to the policy about to be pursued.

When Mr. Watts was appointed agent at the Nawab's court he was instructed to counteract French influence by forming an English party. Well versed in the language, politics, and customs of the country, he soon made friends; and, by a free use of money, he had been able to persuade the Governor of Hooghly to

withdraw his troops from Chandernagore. After the fall of that fortress the native princes and chiefs began to regard the English as the rising power in India, and Moorshedabad became a centre of political intrigue. The chief personages at the court of Surajah Dowlah were Roydullub, the finance minister, and Meer Jaffier, the commander of the army. Roydullub, a shrewd Hindu, possessed great influence through his intimate relations with Jugget Seit, the head of the wealthiest banking firm in India. Meer Jaffier, a Moslem soldier of fortune, had married the sister of Ali Vardi Khan. The civil administration of the province was almost entirely in the hands of Hindus, for it had been the policy of the victors to leave the management of the finance, the revenue, and the local affairs of the country in the hands of the vanquished. The Hindu was thrifty, the Moslem the reverse. The Moslem "was like a sieve—much of what was poured in went through; while a Hindu was like a sponge, which retained all, but on pressure gave back, as required, what it had absorbed." Hindus were also employed at court and in the army; and some of them, like Ram Narain, the Governor of Patna, held important positions. The Moslem nobles kept in their own hands the power of life and death, the principal posts at court, and the higher commands in the army. They maintained bands of armed men on *jagirs* granted by the Crown, and collisions were frequent between those who aspired to power and those who possessed it. There was no real patriotism. The tie which held the several bands together was personal attachment to the sovereign, and when that failed the sovereign fell. Ali Vardi,

a tried warrior of great determination, had enforced obedience to his will. Surajah Dowlah, a weak, capricious prince, was unable to control the discordant elements of which his government was composed. His insolence and cruelty disgusted those around him, and directly he suffered his first reverse the chief men took up an attitude of doubtful allegiance.

CHAPTER VI

PLASSEY

CLIVE, after the fall of Chandernagore, expected to be attacked, but Surajah Dowlah was no Anwar-ud-din. At one time his fears prevailed, and he dammed up the Cosimbazar river to prevent the approach of the ships; at another he ordered Meer Jaffier to Plassey, and promised him ten lacs if he would destroy the English. He pitted the English against the French, and hinted that when Clive and Watson left he would drive the former out of Bengal. Clive, whose experience in the Carnatic had led him to foresee the inevitable collision, felt that he must either attack Surajah Dowlah openly or remove him from the throne by supporting the discontented nobles at his court. Unfortunately, perhaps, for his fair fame, he chose the latter alternative.

On April 30th he wrote to Mr. Pigot:—

One day he (the Nawab) tears my letters, and turns out our *vakil*, and orders his army to march; he next countermands it, sends for the *vakil* and begs his pardon for what he has done. Twice a week he threatens to impale Mr. Watts; in short, he is a compound of everything that is bad, keeps company with none but his menial servants, and is universally hated and despised by the great men. This induces me to acquaint you there is a conspiracy going on against him

by several of the great men, at the head of whom is Jugget Seit himself. . . . I have been applied to for assistance, and every advantage promised the Company can wish. The Committee are of opinion it should be given. . . . For my own part, I am persuaded there can be neither peace nor security while such a monster reigns. . . . You may very shortly expect to hear of a revolution which will put an end to all French expectations of ever settling in this country again.

Jugget Seit, whom the Nawab had struck on the face and threatened to circumcise, appears to have first suggested that the disaffected chiefs should apply to the English for assistance. The first to act upon this advice was Khuda Yar Khan Latti, but, while his request was under consideration, Meer Jaffier, who had come to an understanding with Roydullub and Jugget Seit, made overtures to Mr. Watts. The proposals were submitted by Clive to the Committee on May 1st, and, after due consideration, they agreed to support Meer Jaffier provided he accepted their terms. Their reasons for promoting the revolution are fully set forth in their Report of July 17th, 1757. After detailing their many grievances against Surajah Dowlah, and stating that he was privately endeavouring to bring the French into Bengal, and would certainly attack them when he found a favourable opportunity, they go on to say that he was so universally hated that a revolution would in any case be attempted. If it took place without their assistance they would derive no profit from the change; if, on the other hand, they supported it, they would obtain many advantages, and keep the French out of Bengal. The removal of the Nawab was, in their opinion, a common act of prudence to prevent their own ruin.

The successful conduct of the intrigue upon which the English now entered demanded great skill and secrecy, and the arrangements with Meer Jaffier were therefore confided to Clive and Watts. The first aim of the conspirators was to persuade Surajah Dowlah to disperse the army he had collected at Plassey; and, to lull all suspicion, Clive ordered his troops into quarters, and, in a "soothing letter," asked the prince to follow his example. On May 2nd Clive wrote to Watts: "To-morrow morning we decamp; part of our forces go to Calcutta, the others will go into garrison here; and to take away all suspicion, I have ordered all the artillery and tumbrils to be embarked in boats and sent to Calcutta. . . . Enter into business with Meer Jaffier as soon as you please. I am ready, and will engage to be at Nusary in twelve hours after I receive your letter, which place is to be the rendezvous of the whole army. . . . Tell Meer Jaffier to fear nothing,—that I will join him with five thousand men who never turned their backs. . . . Assure him I will march night and day to his assistance, and stand by him as long as I have a man left."

Surajah Dowlah was glad enough to be freed from the near presence of the English army, but, though profuse in promises, he kept his troops together until he was completely thrown off his guard by an unexpected incident. Baji Rao, the Mahratta chief, considering the moment favourable for an attempt on Bengal, offered to form an alliance with the English, and promised, if they agreed, to pay them double the amount of their losses, to grant them the whole trade of the province, and to expel the French. Clive forwarded the letter in which this pro-

posal was made to the Nawab, hoping that such a proof of friendship and sincerity would induce him to withdraw his troops from Plassey. The plan succeeded; the troops were ordered back to Moorshedabad, and the field was now free for action.

In the delicate negotiations between Mr. Watts and Meer Jaffier it had been necessary to employ a native who could move freely between the parties without attracting suspicion. The agent selected was Omichund, one of the wealthiest Hindus of Calcutta, who had been suspected of encouraging Surajah Dowlah to attack the British settlements, and had been imprisoned by Mr. Drake. When Calcutta fell Omichund accompanied the Nawab to his capital, and the manner in which he was received gave colour to the suspicion that he had betrayed the interests of the Company. He made himself so useful, however, to Clive during the peace negotiations that followed the Nawab's discomfiture before Calcutta that he was restored to favour; and Mr. Watts, with whom he returned to Moorshedabad, was authorised to consult and employ him on all occasions. He was known to be shrewd, subtle, and false, to be grasping and avaricious beyond measure, and to be of an unforgiving disposition. But his personal interest in the success of the revolution was so great that no hesitation was felt in trusting him with the details of the plot. Clive wished to reward him liberally, and was ready not only to compensate him for his losses at Calcutta but to allow him five per cent on all sums received under the treaty. This, however, did not satisfy Omichund, who, having ample proof of the plot in his hands, is said to have threatened disclosure if his share of the plunder were not increased.

On May 14th Watts wrote to Clive: "I showed the articles you sent up to Omichund, who did not approve of them, but insisted upon my demanding for him five per cent on all the Nawab's treasure, which would amount to two *crore* of rupees (£2,000,000), besides a quarter of all his wealth (jewels)." This letter and the draft treaty, which contained an article securing £300,000 to Omichund, were laid before the Committee on May 17th. They decided to strike out the article in favour of Omichund, as his behaviour "rather merited disgrace and punishment than such a stipulation;" and they then considered how they might deceive him, and prevent a disclosure of the plot. The plan they adopted was to prepare two treaties—one on white paper from which Omichund's name was omitted, the other on red paper containing the article in his favour. Both treaties were to be signed by the contracting parties; and Meer Jaffier was to be informed that the one on white paper alone was binding. On the 19th the treaties were signed by the Committee, but Watson refused to sign the sham treaty, for, according to his surgeon, Dr. Ives, "a strict principle of delicacy" would not "permit him to join even in a necessary deception of this nature." Upon this Clive directed his secretary, Mr. Lushington, to affix the Admiral's signature, and the same day sent Mr. Scrafton to Moorshedabad with the treaties. Obscure intrigues delayed the completion of the arrangements, but at last the crisis came. Surajah Dowlah, whose suspicions had been thoroughly aroused, determined to crush Meer Jaffier, and surrounded his house with troops. Meer Jaffier prepared for resistance, and after executing the treaty sent it with an urgent message to Clive to

march without delay. The messenger reached Calcutta on June 11th; and, as there was no longer any reason for delay, the Committee resolved upon an immediate advance. The substance of the treaty was as follows :—

1. Confirmation of the treaty with Surajah Dowlah.
2. An offensive and defensive alliance against all enemies.
3. The French to be forbidden to re-settle in Bengal, and their factories to be transferred to the English.
4. Compensation to be granted for losses at Calcutta—To the Company, £1,000,000.
5. To the European inhabitants, £500,000.
6. To the native inhabitants, £200,000.
7. To the Armenians, £70,000.
8. All lands within the Mahratta ditch, and 600 yards beyond, to be ceded.
9. The Company to have the *zamindari* of the country to the south of Calcutta, as far as Kalpi, subject to the payment of the customary rent.
10. The Nawab to pay the expenses of all English troops sent to his assistance.
11. No new forts to be erected on the river below Hooghly.
12. The above terms to be carried out as soon as Meer Jaffier becomes Subadar.
13. The Company to aid Meer Jaffier in obtaining the government, and to assist him to the utmost against all enemies.

A supplementary treaty was also signed, under which Meer Jaffier engaged to pay £500,000 to the army and navy, and £120,000 to the members of the Committee.

Clive had been the first to suggest the idea of a revolution, and throughout its progress he was the life and soul of the movement. Watson, though ready enough to help by lending men, declined to assume any responsibility for an enterprise over which he could

exercise no control, and of the success of which he was doubtful. The Committee, with feeble, timid Mr. Drake at its head, was a source of embarrassment rather than of strength. Clive, unaided and alone, had not only to carry on the details of an intricate intrigue, but to make the arrangements for an advance, and quiet the fears of the Governor and Council. He was, however, supported by the firm conviction that the policy he was pursuing was the most advantageous to the Company and to England, and with rare tenacity of purpose he never lost sight of the object he had in view. After the signature of the treaties on May 19th his anxiety must have been great. Every hour's delay increased the chance of discovery, or of the appearance of De Bussy on the scene; and the rainy season, when it would be impossible to take the field, was fast approaching. The arrival of Meer Jaffier's messenger was the signal that the moment for action had arrived, and Clive at once threw off the mask.

On June 12th the troops at Calcutta, reinforced by one hundred and fifty sailors from the fleet, reached Chandernagore. Next morning Clive, after despatching a letter to the Nawab, which was virtually a declaration of war, moved forward with his whole force. Fifteen miles north of Hooghly he was joined by Mr. Watts and his staff, who had succeeded in making their escape on the previous day; and on the 18th he took the fort of Katwa, in which large supplies of grain were stored. Here, according to agreement, Clive should have been joined by Meer Jaffier, but in place of a friendly native force he found a letter in which Meer Jaffier promised to join the English on the field of battle, and explained his failure

to carry out the original programme. At the same time Omichund, who had accompanied Clive from Calcutta, received intelligence that the Nawab and Meer Jaffier were reconciled, and that the plot was discovered.

The following day, the 19th, the monsoon set in with unusual severity; the camp was flooded, and the men were obliged to seek shelter from the fury of the storm in the fort and town. The situation was embarrassing, and Clive, a prey to anxiety and doubt, was uncertain how to act. The ground, which was still in fair order for marching, would soon be rendered impassable by the rains; the men were in excellent spirits, and a rapid advance would anticipate M. Law, who was hastening down from Patna. On the other hand, to cross the Bhagirathi was to provoke an engagement of doubtful issue under conditions in which defeat would be fatal to British interests in India. To retreat to Calcutta would be to abandon all ambitious projects, and to proclaim to the expectant people of Bengal that the English had failed to overthrow their ruler. There remained a middle course, which Clive appears at first to have favoured. The position occupied by the English was a strong one, provisions were plentiful, and there was good communication by water with Calcutta. It would be easy to form an entrenched camp, and, while harassing the Nawab, to form an alliance with the Mahrattas and the disaffected native princes. Whether it was that Clive had suddenly awakened to the enormous responsibility resting upon his shoulders, and distrusted his power to bear it alone, or that he was under the influence of one of those fits of depression from which he occasionally suffered, is uncertain. All we know is that he hesitated.

Strange as it may appear, the hero of Arcot sought advice from Mr. Drake and his council at Calcutta, and the man who had seen the disastrous effects of Gingen's council at Volcondah assembled a council of war. The answer of the Committee reached Clive after Plassey had been fought and won, and its tenor may be gathered from his reply: "I have received your letter of the 23rd inst., the contents of which are so indefinite and contradictory that I can put no other construction upon it than an intent to clear yourself at my expense had the expedition miscarried. It puts me in mind of the famous answer of the Delphic oracle to Pyrrhus, 'Aio te, Æacide, Romanos vincere posse.'"

On the 21st Clive summoned a council of war to decide whether the English should attack at once or entrench themselves at Katwa. The question having been put, Clive, contrary to the usual practice, gave his own vote first. He voted for delay, and was supported by Kilpatrick and eleven others. A minority of seven, with Eyre Coote at their head, voted for an immediate attack. The result might have been expected, for a council of war never fights, and if the opinion of the majority had been followed on this occasion the Company would have been ruined. When the council broke up Clive withdrew to a clump of trees, and, seating himself in the shade, remained for an hour in deep thought. He was not satisfied with the decision of the council. A brave, determined soldier himself, his sympathy must have been with the bold policy so ably advocated by Eyre Coote; and, when passing the arguments under review, he must have felt that in giving his own opinion first he had unduly influenced the votes of his juniors. Perhaps

in that hour of solitude his thoughts went back to those stirring days in the Carnatic when Paradis and De Bussy were overthrowing native armies with a handful of disciplined men, and Dupleix was so nearly realising his ambitious dreams. The prize of Indian Empire for which they had striven was surely one for which all might be dared, all risked. So he may have thought, for when he rose all doubt and hesitation had passed away. He had decided to push forward, and during the day his resolution was strengthened by the arrival of reassuring letters from Meer Jaffier. As he was returning to camp he met Eyre Coote, and simply telling him that notwithstanding the decision of the council of war he intended to march next morning, he passed on to make the necessary arrangements for the advance.

While the English were marching up from Calcutta, Moorshedabad was the scene of important events. On the 14th June Surajah Dowlah received Clive's imperious letter, and in a moment the scales fell from his eyes. He saw that Meer Jaffier was in league with the English, and realised to the full his perilous position. But he was so overwhelmed with terror that instead of instantly seizing and punishing the traitor, he tried to deceive him. A Koran having been produced, the Nawab swore that he would never attempt the life of his powerful subject, and Meer Jaffier that he would fight to the death for his chief. They parted with smiles on their faces and treachery in their hearts, the first to order an immediate advance on Plassey, Meer Jaffier to send a secret messenger to Clive. When the army was ordered to move the troops mutinied, and refused to march until all arrears had been paid. For

three days the streets of Moorshedabad were filled with mutinous soldiers, and order was only restored by a liberal distribution of money. On the day the army marched Surajah Dowlah heard of the fall of Katwa, and thinking that Clive would forestall him in the occupation of Plassey, halted at Mankarah. Here he proposed to entrench and await the attack of the English; but finding that they did not cross the Bhagirathi, he continued his march, and on the evening of the 21st occupied the lines north of Plassey, which had been thrown up during the siege of Chandernagore.

On the 22nd Clive crossed the river, and that evening received a letter from Meer Jaffier suggesting that he should make a long detour, and surprise Surajah Dowlah in his camp at Mankarah. He briefly replied that he intended to march at once to Plassey and to proceed next day to Daudpore, and that if Meer Jaffier did not join him there he would make peace with the Nawab. The advance then commenced. The country was flooded, the rain continued to pour in torrents, and the men, marching through mud and at times up to their waists in water, could with difficulty keep their ammunition dry. After a most fatiguing march of fifteen miles they reached Plassey, and passing through the village occupied an extensive mango grove about one in the morning. As they were taking up their position the sound of martial music warned them that the enemy, who were supposed to be at Mankarah, were close at hand. The unlooked-for *rencontre* was enough to shake Clive's faith in the sincerity of Meer Jaffier, but in the presence of danger he was always the cool, thoughtful leader of men. Sentries were posted, and

the men lay down to take such rest as they might on the sodden ground, whilst their chief passed the remainder of the night in making arrangements for the coming battle. The grove in which the English bivouacked was surrounded by a mud bank and ditch, and about fifty yards in front of these, on the left bank of the Bhagirathi, there was a hunting-lodge in which Clive fixed his headquarters. A little more than a mile to the north of the grove were the lines of the enemy, with their right resting on the river and their left stretching far out into the open plain. Nearly midway between the two positions, and close to the river, were two tanks, surrounded by large banks of earth, which played an important part in the battle. Clive's small army was composed of one thousand one hundred Europeans and two thousand one hundred sepoys, with ten light field-pieces. It included detachments from Adlercron's regiment, now the Thirty-ninth, the Dorsetshire Regiment, which bears on its colours the word Plassey and the proud motto, *Primus in Indis*, and from the Bengal and Madras battalions,[1] whose ranks were filled with Dutch, Germans, and French prisoners who had taken service with the English. Surajah Dowlah had thirty-five thousand infantry, fifteen thousand cavalry, and fifty-three heavy guns; and with him were M. St. Frais and about fifty French soldiers. His army was strong in numbers, but those numbers inspired their leader with no feeling of confidence. He was entangled in the meshes of an intrigue from which there could be no issue except by the sword, and that sword was in the hands of men who had sworn to betray him. He had alienated those who would have

[1] Now the Royal Munster and the Royal Dublin Fusiliers.

supported him, and now in his hour of need he mistrusted his own army almost as much as he dreaded the enemy.

As the heavy rain-clouds rolled away on the morning of the memorable day (June 23rd) which was to decide the fate of India, Clive climbed to the roof of the hunting-lodge to watch the enemy take up their position. His own troops were drawn up in line in front of the mangoes, with their left resting on the river—the Europeans in the centre, the guns and sepoys on the flanks. The army of Surajah Dowlah moved out with all the pomp and panoply of war—the infantry with their banners flying, the cavalry with their drawn swords flashing back the rays of the rising sun, the elephants with their scarlet trappings, and the heavy guns with their unwieldy platforms and struggling teams of oxen. St. Frais and his men, supported by Meer Mudan, the Nawab's only faithful general, occupied the tanks. To the left of Meer Mudan was the division of Roydullub, and the line was continued, in the direction of Plassey, by the divisions of Yar Lutf Khan and Meer Jaffier, so as completely to overlap the English. As the movement developed Clive saw that its object was to drive him into the Bhagirathi. He was unable to attack the key of the position, held by St. Frais, without exposing his right flank; and the guns were so skilfully dispersed between the masses of men that an attack upon them would lead to no decisive result. He therefore determined to act upon the defensive, and drew his boats together beneath the river bank in a spot convenient for embarkation, should a retreat become necessary.

At 8 A.M. the French guns on the tank opened fire,

and the cannonade soon became so hot that Clive was compelled to take shelter in the grove. Here his men were completely protected from the fire of the heavy guns, whilst his field-pieces, firing through hastily cut embrasures, did great execution amongst the enemy. After the cannonade had lasted three hours, Clive, seeing no sign of Meer Jaffier's promised co-operation, decided to maintain his position till evening, and attack at midnight, when the enemy would be stupefied with sleep and opium. At noon there was a heavy shower of rain, and the enemy's cavalry, expecting the English fire to slacken, advanced towards the grove. They were met by a heavy fire of grape, and driven back, with the loss of their leader, Meer Mudan. About 3 P.M. the enemy drew off to their camp, and at this moment the corps on the left was seen to detach itself from the main body, and move towards the English right. It proved afterwards to be that of Meer Jaffier, but this was not known at the time, and it was kept at a distance by the field-pieces. Shortly afterwards Kilpatrick noticed that the French were withdrawing from the tanks, and, sending an officer to tell Clive of what he had done, moved rapidly forward to seize the position.

Clive, who, worn out with fatigue, was asleep when the officer arrived, started up, and running forward severely reprimanded Kilpatrick for deranging his plans. On reaching the ground, however, he saw that as the tanks were already occupied by his troops, and the enemy were again streaming out of their entrenchments, a renewal of the action was inevitable, and, with his usual promptness, he decided to attack. Concluding that the corps on his right was that of Meer Jaffier,

and being thus relieved from anxiety for his exposed flank, he occupied a bank nearer the lines and kept up a steady fire on the gun-teams of the enemy. In vain the gunners tried to bring their guns into action; the draught oxen and drivers fell rapidly, and presently Clive, seeing that the decisive moment had come, ordered a general advance. After a brief struggle the lines were carried and Plassey was won.

Plassey was not a great battle, but few victories have been followed by more far-reaching or more permanent results. It opened that extraordinary career of conquest which has established the Empire of England in the East, and has made a small island in the western seas the greatest Mahomedan power in the world. The loss of the victors was but seventy men, that of the vanquished between five and six hundred. The rout was complete, and the pursuit was continued to Daudpore, where the British force halted for the night. Next morning Clive was visited by Meer Jaffier, who, doubtful of his reception, started when the guards turned out in his honour. He was only reassured when Clive saluted him as Subadar of the three provinces, and urged him to push on to Moorshedabad, and save it from plunder. The same day Clive marched to Boptah, and on the 25th halted at Mandipore, within six miles of the capital.

The crisis of the battle of Plassey was the death of Meer Mudan. When he fell Surajah Dowlah sent for Meer Jaffier, and, casting his turban at his feet, implored him to defend the throne. He might have spared himself the humiliation, for the traitor rode off, with lying promises on his lips, to send a messenger, who never

reached his destination, to bid Clive push on as the battle was more than half won. The unfortunate prince then consulted Roydullub, who advised him to return to Moorshedabad, and leave everything in the hands of his generals. In an evil moment he accepted the treacherous advice, and, mounting a swift camel, reached his capital the same night. His first step was to shut himself up in his palace and take counsel of his friends. Some advised him to throw himself on Clive's generosity; others to bribe his soldiers to fight again. He seemed for a moment to favour another trial of strength in the field, but no sooner had his friends left him than his courage failed. When night fell, and he heard that Meer Jaffier had entered the city, he abandoned himself to his fears. Disguising himself in mean apparel and taking with him his favourite wife and one faithful eunuch, he set out in a boat for Patna. His intention was to join M. Law, who was hastening to his assistance, but at Rajmahal the rowers grew weary, and he was obliged to land and conceal himself in a garden. Here he was discovered by a *fakir* whose nose and ears he had cut off, and betrayed to the governor. Unknown to Clive he was brought back to Moorshedabad, treated with indignity, and put to death in his prison. M. Law heard of Plassey at Tacriagully and halted for instructions. Had he gone twenty miles farther he would have met and saved Surajah Dowlah, and perhaps altered the course of events in Bengal. After the Nawab's capture he retired by forced marches to the frontier, followed by Eyre Coote, whose pursuit was one of the most remarkable episodes of the campaign.

When Meer Jaffier reached Moorshedabad the city

was in a state of anarchy and confusion; the terrified people expected the usual massacre and plunder to follow the advance of the victorious army, and they were astonished beyond measure when a proclamation informed them that the English commander had appointed Meer Jaffier Subadar, and halted at some distance from the city. On the 29th Clive made his entry, and passed, with a small guard, through densely crowded streets to his quarters near the palace. Directly his arrival was known the chief men hastened to make their submission, and offer the customary presents;[1] but he declared that he would receive nothing except at the hands of Meer Jaffier, and assured his visitors that all he wanted from them was their assistance in carrying on the government. In the evening he seated Meer Jaffier on the *musnud* in the presence of the Rajahs and chief men, and acknowledged his authority by presenting a few gold coins.

Next morning Clive and Meer Jaffier went to the house of Jugget Seit to settle money matters, and the three men entered into mutual engagements upon oath to support each other's "interests." The treasures of Surajah Dowlah had been greatly over-estimated. Mr. Watts had informed Clive that they amounted to forty millions sterling, and the disappointment was great when they proved to be only one million and a half. As this sum was far too small to meet the English demands and leave Meer Jaffier money for current expenses, it was decided that the English should receive at once one half of their

[1] Referring to this Clive afterwards said, "Had I accepted these offers I might have been possessed of millions which the present Court of Directors could not have dispossessed me of."—Report of Commission.

demand, "two thirds in money and one third in gold and silver plate, jewels, and goods; and that the other half should be discharged in three years at three equal and annual payments." Besides the sums stipulated in the original and supplementary treaties Meer Jaffier after his accession gave the Council £60,000, Clive £160,000, Mr. Watts £80,000, and others smaller amounts. Altogether the revolution cost him nearly three millions in cash alone. After the conference at Jugget Seit's house Omichund was informed of the trick that had been played upon him. When told that the red treaty was a sham and that he was to have nothing, he fainted and his mind gave way. He subsequently went on a pilgrimage to one of the Hindu shrines, and in August Clive wrote of him as a person capable of rendering great services to the Company, but he never completely recovered, and died eighteen months later in a state of imbecility.

The English had little reason to regard Omichund as their friend, and there is not much in his character to awaken sympathy with his fate. Though loaded with benefits by Surajah Dowlah he had been one of the first to join the conspiracy, and for a few lacs of rupees had been equally ready to betray the plot. Still they might have remembered that his services had been such as to entitle him to consideration, and that he had risked life and fortune in forwarding their project. The sham treaty was a blunder no less than a crime, for it was unnecessary. The difficulties that confronted Clive were less serious that those which De Bussy had more than once successfully encountered; and the risks of an advance early in May were apparently no

greater than they were in June. It is hardly possible to avoid the conclusion that Mr. Watts was unduly alarmed at the threats of Omichund; and that the intrigues which preceded the revolution were partly due to the desire of Clive and the Committee to drive a hard bargain with Meer Jaffier. The day after it was known that the latter had bound himself to comply with their exorbitant demands the English troops marched. Clive defended his action many years afterwards with his accustomed boldness. Speaking in the House of Commons he said that he looked upon Omichund as "a public enemy" and considered "every artifice that could deceive him to be not only defensible but just and proper." When questioned by the Select Committee as to the attachment of Admiral Watson's signature to the fictitious treaty, he declared that, to the best of his belief, the admiral gave Mr. Lushington leave to sign his name, but that he would have ordered his name to be attached whether he had consented or not. He thought it warrantable in such a case, and would do it again a hundred times. It is difficult to believe that Watson, after refusing to sign, gave any one permission to attach his name. But he certainly expressed no resentment or surprise, and Dr. Ives, his surgeon, states that every one applauded the artifice by which Omichund was so deservedly outwitted. If it be true that Watson took no part in the intrigue, it is equally true that when it succeeded and the plunder was divided, he claimed, in addition to his large share as senior naval officer, an equal share with those members of the Committee who had signed the sham treaty. In so doing he placed himself in the position of an accomplice after the fact. The trick by

which Clive deceived Omichund has done infinite harm to his reputation. No explanation can remove the fact that it was simply and purely dishonourable, or efface the stain that it has left upon his character. All that can be said is that except in this one instance he appears to have been singularly straightforward in his dealings with the natives, and that, before he left Bengal, he had succeeded in winning their implicit confidence.

Clive was now a wealthy man, but the time came when, as already said, he expressed his astonishment that he had not taken more. When taunted before the Select Committee in 1773 with having received upwards of £100,000, he replied, "When I recollect entering the Nawab's treasury at Moorshedabad, with heaps of gold and silver to the right and left, and these crowned with jewels, by God! at this moment, do I stand astonished at my own moderation." And alluding to his entry into the capital, he said, "On that day, being under no kind of restraint, but that of my own conscience, I might have become too rich for a subject; but I had fixed upon that period to accomplish all my views whatever, and from that period to this hour, which is a space of fifteen years, I have not benefited myself directly or indirectly the value of one shilling, the *jagir* excepted." He accepted about £200,000, a sum which a mere word to Meer Jaffier would have doubled; and he refused all private presents. His acceptance of the money was open and avowed; it was contrary to no existing rule of the Company whose servant he was, and it was in accordance with the general custom of the period in India. No one at the time thought of accusing him; and the Directors, with a full know-

ledge that large presents had been made, wrote (March 8th, 1758) that they did not intend "to break in upon any sums of money which have been given by the Nawab to particular persons, by way of free gift or gratuity, for their services." Clive's action, however, was none the less impolitic, for it set an evil example, which was afterwards to bear bitter fruit; and it gave men who would not have exercised the same self-control in similar circumstances an opportunity to declaim against his rapacity.

CHAPTER VII

THE FIRST GOVERNORSHIP OF BENGAL

On July 3rd, whilst the mangled remains of Surajah Dowlah were being paraded on the back of an elephant through the streets of Moorshedabad, the English were loading their boats with three-quarters of a million sterling which had been paid to them by his successor. The boats passed down the river with drums beating and colours flying, and their arrival at Calcutta was the signal for general rejoicing. The whole settlement was intoxicated with joy at the sight of so much wealth, and at the sudden transition from poverty to opulence. The influx of bullion was followed by a revival of trade, the erection of better houses, general extravagance, reckless speculation, and eventually by an abuse of the trade privileges granted under the treaty.

Clive remained at Moorshedabad until Eyre Coote returned from his pursuit of M. Law. He then set out for Calcutta, where his first duty was to attend the funeral of Admiral Watson, who died, universally regretted, on August 16th. For several weeks afterwards Clive was actively engaged in reforming abuses and adapting the government machinery to new conditions. The money allotted as compensation to the people of Calcutta had

to be distributed; acrimonious disputes with regard to the army and navy prize-money to be adjusted; the military force to be increased, and a civil service to be organised. The Company's servants in Bengal were immeasurably inferior to their contemporaries in Madras, who had been trained in the rough school of war. They were still mere traders; and the sudden acquisition of wealth soon loosed the bonds of discipline, and lowered the moral tone of both the civil and military services. The necessity for a better staff had been foreseen by Clive as early as July 26th, and he then suggested to the Directors that they should send out good officers for the army, and "capable young gentlemen" for the civil service.

Clive would now have been glad to go home with his fortune; but he felt that he could not leave whilst England and France were at war, and that his proper place was in the Carnatic. "I make no doubt," he writes, "of being there soon after the breaking up of the monsoon, which will be as early as the two contending parties can take the field." Circumstances were, however, too strong for him. He had set up an incapable Nawab, and, to save Bengal from anarchy, he was obliged to support him. Meer Jaffier was a soldier of fortune, and no statesman. His son, Meerun, was a weak edition of Surajah Dowlah. His relations were eager to share in the spoils of office; and his troops were clamouring for pay. The English had emptied his treasury; and, in his extremity, he decided to plunder the Hindu grandees. They at once took alarm; Roydullub surrounded himself with his followers; and Ram Narain, the Governor of Patna, and the Rajahs

of Midnapore and Purniah, were driven to rebellion. At the same time Shujah Dowlah, the Nawab of Oude, threatened to invade Behar. The territory of this prince stretched from the Jumna to the mountains of Nepal, and from the borders of Behar to the neighbourhood of Delhi. His resources were great: the French with M. Law were in his pay; and he was supposed to have made Ram Narain his friend. Meer Jaffier, unable to crush the rebellion or resist the invasion, appealed to Clive for assistance, and his appeal was not made in vain. Clive marched on November 19th, and on December 3rd reached Rajmahal. The general debauchery that followed the distribution of the Plassey prize-money had reduced his force to five hundred and fifty Europeans and fifteen hundred sepoys; but his insight into the cause of the disorders was so clear and statesmanlike that he had no misgivings as to the result. His policy was to uphold Meer Jaffier, and, at the same time, prevent him from crushing the Hindu grandees. It was completely successful. He suppressed the rebellion by guaranteeing the safety of the Hindus, and reconciling them to Meer Jaffier; and the threat of invasion came to nothing. Whilst helping Meer Jaffier in his difficulties, Clive was not unmindful of the interests of the Company. He obtained money for the expenses of the army, and a monopoly of the salt trade; and he insisted that the revenue of certain districts near Calcutta should be assigned to the English in payment of their claims.

Meer Jaffier, when he plotted with Clive to supplant his master, had not calculated upon being a mere cypher in the hands of the English. He had hoped to direct and command, and his mortification was great when he

realised that the sovereign power had passed from his hands to those of Clive. He could only obtain English support by granting new trade privileges, new concessions, or new lands; and soon the wealth of Bengal, instead of filling the pockets of himself and his nobles, began to flow in a steady stream towards Calcutta. The crafty Hindus were paying open court to the English commander; and the English merchants who a few months previously had been glad to purchase protection for themselves and their trade, were daily encroaching upon his authority. He felt deeply the humiliating position in which he was placed, and would willingly have thrown off the yoke. But he was caught in the toils which Clive with consummate skill had thrown round him, and was powerless. Clive had by this time realised that the English could not retreat without ruin from the position into which they had been forced by their success, and that he had no alternative but to exercise paramount power. He knew that Meer Jaffier and the Moslem chiefs were jealous of his great influence, and fully appreciated the delicacy of the relations that existed between them and his countrymen. His aim was to maintain the *prestige* of the English without wounding the feelings of the natives, and he carried out this difficult policy with astonishing success. His authority over the minds of the natives was complete. He had been created an Omrah of the Empire,[1] and, in the remotest villages of Bengal, the name of Sabut Jung, the Daring in War, was on every one's

[1] Clive was appointed Mansabdar, or commander of six thousand foot and four thousand horse; and his native title was Zabdit-ul-mulk, Nasir-ud-Dowlah, Sabut Jung Bahadur.

lips. He was regarded with mingled feelings of respect and awe; and men's minds were filled with admiration of his valour, his skill in the conduct of intricate affairs, his steady support of those whose cause he espoused, his inviolable observance of his word, his moderation, and his unbroken success.

Shortly after Clive's return to Calcutta in 1758 a vessel arrived with two despatches from the Directors. One, dated August 3rd, 1757, appointed a commission of five, with Clive at their head, to carry on the government; the other, dated early in November, nominated a council of ten, over which the four senior members were to preside in rotation, each for three months. In the later instructions Clive's name was omitted, without explanation, and he was naturally indignant at having been passed over. The extraordinary device of a rotation government had its origin in ignorance of India, in the difficulty of governing a country so far from England,[1] and in personal quarrels and jealousies amongst the Directors. Fortunately for British interests in India the members of the new council were patriotic enough to recognise the impossibility of carrying out the orders, and they entrusted the conduct of affairs to the only man who could carry them to a successful issue. They offered the presidency to Clive, in a letter which does them the greatest honour, and he accepted their offer in the spirit in which it was made. A few days after the anniversary of Plassey Clive took his seat as

[1] It took at least a year to receive an answer to a letter from India; and, as the aspect of affairs was constantly changing, the orders of the Directors were often quite inapplicable to the new conditions that had arisen.

President of the Council; and a few months later he received a commission, as Governor of Bengal, which the Directors had sent out as soon as they heard of his victory. The responsibility of governing without a commission was great, and Clive would probably not have undertaken it if he had not received a letter from Mr. Payne, chairman of Directors, which satisfied him that his great services were appreciated. He was informed, in terms that must have been highly gratifying, that he and Lawrence were to command the troops in India; that Pitt and Lord Barrington had expressed a wish to send him a colonel's commission; and that it was proposed to confer upon him a distinguished mark of the royal favour.

One of the first questions to engage his attention was that of rendering assistance to the Governor of Madras. Soon after the declaration of war, May 17th, 1756, the French Ministry determined to drive the English out of India. An expedition was organised, and the command given to Count Lally, the son of an Irish exile, who had won his spurs at Fontenoy. He was a keen, daring soldier, but he was completely ignorant of oriental life and warfare, and was ill fitted by a hot temper to receive advice. The French Ministry gave him extensive powers as commander-in-chief and commissary-general. Pitt with greater wisdom placed the British troops under men of tried Indian experience like Lawrence and Clive. On April 29th, 1758, after a voyage of unusual length, Lally landed at Pondicherry, and on June 2nd Fort St. David, which had defied Dupleix in the plenitude of his power, capitulated. The defence was weak, and Clive was furiously indignant

at "the infamous surrender." "May the worst of punishment," he writes to Pocock, "attend those who so shamefully gave up St. David's to the French! I cannot think of that transaction with common patience; every reflection about it pains me to the very soul."

Lally next planned an attack upon Madras, but, having no money for the equipment of his army, he first marched against the Rajah of Tanjore, upon whom, he was told, the French had certain claims. While preparing to storm Tanjore he heard that the French fleet under D'Aché had been defeated by Pocock, and hastily breaking up his camp, re-entered Pondicherry on August 28th. Soon afterwards the English and French fleets left the coast. The position of the combatants on the departure of the fleets was favourable to the English. Madras was well supplied with provisions and money; the Governor, Pigot, and the Commandant, Stringer Lawrence, were men of tried ability; the garrison was one thousand seven hundred and fifty-eight Europeans and two thousand two hundred and twenty sepoys; reinforcements were expected early in the spring, and Pocock had promised to return when the season permitted. Lally was able to take the field with two thousand European infantry, three hundred European cavalry, and five thousand sepoys. But he had no money: he had exhausted the districts from which he might have drawn supplies; and his native soldiers, unpaid and harshly treated, wandered off in marauding bands to plunder the country. The siege lasted from December 13th, 1758, to February 16th, 1759, when, on the return of Pocock, the French retired in disorder. There was never any doubt as to the result. From

beginning to end the garrison was full of confidence, and even before the arrival of the fleet the French must have given up all hope of success. For twenty days Lally's troops had received no pay; his native soldiers had disappeared; his supply of shells was exhausted; he had only twenty thousand pounds of gunpowder left; and there was no practicable breach. The great enterprise had failed and the sequel is soon told. September 10th, 1759, D'Aché was again worsted by Pocock, and a few days later left the coast never to return. On January 21st, 1760, Eyre Coote defeated the French at Wandiwash, and on January 16th, 1761, Pondicherry surrendered. Five years later Lally, charged with treason and condemned to death, perished miserably on the scaffold.

Clive took the liveliest interest in the war, and seized every opportunity of sending advice to his friends at Madras. He was in favour of vigorous measures, and urged Pocock to attack the French fleet under the guns of Pondicherry, and Pigot to lay waste the French territories. "Can't," he writes to Pigot, "a body of Mahratta or other horse be taken into pay to burn, ravage, and destroy the whole country in such a manner as that no revenue can be drawn from thence? Bengal is in itself an inexhaustible fund of riches, and you may depend upon being supplied with money and provisions in abundance. In the meantime, what must become of the French if they cannot raise money sufficient to pay their forces? They must disband their blacks, and their white ones will disband themselves." When Clive heard that the siege had commenced he at once predicted its failure. He thought Lally

must be mad, or his situation desperate, to attempt it; and he wrote to Pitt: "I have so high an opinion of the gentlemen within (Madras), that I dare answer they will make such a defence as will do honour to our nation and end in M. Lally's disgrace." The result of the siege was some compensation for the loss of Fort St. David, and he warmly congratulated his friends on the honour they had gained.

The first successes of the French were soon known in Bengal; and the news, greatly magnified by rumour, produced a marked change in the attitude of the natives. An intercepted letter disclosed the fact that several of Meer Jaffier's generals had offered to join the French against the English; and, whilst these intrigues were going on, Roydullub, who was under British protection, was dismissed and disgraced. To remove any unfavourable impression, Clive invited Meer Jaffier to Calcutta, and the latter, to whom an appearance of cordiality was equally necessary, accepted the invitation. He was received with every mark of honour and respect, and after having been magnificently entertained and loaded with presents, returned well pleased to his capital. With him went young Warren Hastings, whom Clive had selected to succeed Mr. Scrafton as Resident.

Clive, while dealing with the native difficulty in Bengal, did not neglect the appeal for aid from Madras. His effective force did not exceed seven hundred Europeans, and there was a decided feeling at Calcutta against any reduction. He believed, however, that his personal influence over the natives would enable him to preserve order in the Residency, and he was determined to help his friends. Two courses were open

to him—to send troops to Madras, or to create a diversion in the Deccan whence the French drew a large proportion of their supplies. He was convinced that Madras could not be taken so long as it was well supplied with provisions and money; and he boldly resolved against the unanimous opinion of his council to send a force under Colonel Forde into the Deccan. His action at this critical period in the history of India appears to have been dictated by a sound view of the general political situation, and it was crowned with the most complete success. A pretext for an expedition was soon found. Clive had received overtures from Nizam Ali, the brother of Salabut Jung, and from Ananda Razu, a native chief in the Northern Circars, whilst De Bussy was still a power in the Deccan. To both he had sent conciliatory letters; and when, after the recall of De Bussy, Ananda Razu seized Vizagapatam and hoisted the English flag, he decided to support him. The opposition of the Council and difficulties with regard to equipment delayed the departure of the force; and it was October 20th, 1758, before Forde was able to land at Vizagapatam.

After having overcome financial and transport difficulties that would have daunted most men, Forde signally defeated the French army under Conflans at Kondur and invested Masulipatam. The place was protected by a strong bastioned *enceinte;* it was situated on an inlet of the sea; and, on the land side, was completely surrounded by a morass from three to eighteen feet deep. It was capable of a prolonged defence; yet Forde, with a force inferior to the garrison, carried it by storm (April 7th, 1759), while a French corps of

observation was within striking distance, and Salabut Jung with forty thousand men was within fifteen miles of his camp. Conflans surrendered with five hundred Europeans, two thousand five hundred and thirty-seven sepoys, and a hundred and twenty guns; and Forde had much difficulty in disposing of the prisoners, who far outnumbered his own men. The results of the expedition equalled Clive's most sanguine expectations. It distracted the attention of the French while they were preparing for the siege of Madras; it kept in the Deccan one thousand Europeans and three thousand native troops, who would otherwise have joined Lally; it led to the cession of Masulipatam and the Northern Circars to England, and replaced French by British influence at the court of the Nizam. The storming of Masulipatam is one of the most daring feats of arms on record; and it is related that the gallantry displayed by the sepoys during the assault was equal to that of their European comrades. And yet, strange to say, the Englishman who had rivalled the best exploits of Charles the Twelfth, though strongly recommended by Clive, received no mark of distinction from the Company or from the country he had served so well.

Forde's expedition emptied Fort William of stores and ammunition; and, when it sailed, only two hundred and eighty Europeans, and those "the very scum of the men," remained for the defence of the settlement. With such scant resources, and the magic of his name, Clive prepared to govern Bengal. The small force was made up of detachments from the three settlements, and Clive's decision to form them into one corps led to the resignation of some of the Bengal officers. Yet, in these

circumstances, he sent on all reinforcements reaching Calcutta to Madras, and even authorised Forde to proceed, if necessary, to the Carnatic. "Not a man shall be kept," he wrote to Pigot; "you may depend upon every assistance in our power. . . . You may draw upon us for what money you choose; we have twenty lacs in the treasury." Clive's native policy at this time is well summed up in a sentence of his instructions to Warren Hastings: "I would have you act upon all occasions so as to avoid coming to extremities, and at the same time show as much spirit and resolution as will convince the *durbar* that we always have it in our power to make ourselves respected." In the same letter he wrote that the withdrawal of British protection from natives to whom it had once been promised, "would entail disgrace and infamy on the English nation"; and when Meer Jaffier, on the departure of Forde's expedition, sought to gratify his hatred of Roydullub and his friends, he directed Hastings to protect them. Meer Jaffier keenly resented the interference, and was beginning to throw out hints that he expected the mortgaged districts to be restored to him, when, early in 1759, a "storm from the north" completely altered the position of affairs.

The Padishah, Alumgeer the Second, had become a mere cypher in the hands of his Vizier; he had lost all semblance of authority; and he and his family were virtually prisoners in the palace at Delhi. His eldest son, Shah Alum, known as the Shahzada, escaped; and after "fishing in troubled waters amongst the Rohillas, Jats, Mahrattas, and Pathans," fled for protection to the Nawab of Oude. He gave out that he had been appointed Subadar

of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa; and being joined by many of the military adventurers who swarmed over India at that time, prepared to invade Behar. At Moorshedabad it was reported that he was supported by Shujah Dowlah and had been joined by the French under M. Law. Meer Jaffier was seriously alarmed; he doubted the fidelity of Ram Narain; his troops refused to march unless their arrears were paid; and the Sets, from whom he hoped to obtain money, were absent on a pilgrimage. In his extremity he appealed to Clive, on whom all eyes were now turned. The situation was critical; the siege of Madras was in progress; the success of Forde's expedition was not assured; and Bengal was denuded of troops. Clive did not hesitate a moment, and wrote to Meer Jaffier: "Rest assured that the English are your staunch and firm friends, and that they never desert a cause in which they have once taken a part." He was really more concerned at the dissensions between the Nawab and his people than at the prospect of meeting the Shahzada; and his first step was to reconcile their conflicting interests. To Ram Narain, whom Meer Jaffier was still plotting to remove and plunder, he sent renewed assurances of protection, and instructions to defend Patna to the last. To the native princes, who had expressed their unwillingness to follow Meer Jaffier against the heir to the throne, he promised redress. And to the Nawab, who had thought of purchasing the retreat of the Shahzada, he wrote: "I have just heard . . . that your Excellency is going to offer a sum of money to the King's son. If you do this you will have Shujah Dowlah, the Mahrattas, and many more come from all parts to the confines of your country, who will bully you out of money till you

have none left in your treasury. . . . I beg your Excellency will rely on the fidelity of the English, and of those troops which are attached to you."

On February 25th, 1759, Clive marched, and, after remaining a few days at Moorshedabad, proceeded towards Patna. He had with him only four hundred Europeans, of whom one hundred and forty were recruits, and two thousand five hundred sepoys, in addition to the Nawab's troops, on whom little dependence could be placed. But his letters show that he had the utmost confidence in himself and his men; and he expresses his belief that with them alone he would be able to give a good account of the Shahzada. Before he left Calcutta the prince's agents had offered him "provinces upon provinces, with whatever his heart could desire," as the price of his support. He returned a firm yet respectful reply. He was bound, he said, by the strictest engagements to assist Meer Jaffier at all times, and it was "not the custom of the English nation to be guilty of insincerity."

When the Shahzada crossed the Caramassa, men flocked to his standard in the hope of plunder, and by the time he reached Patna he was at the head of forty thousand men. Ram Narain delayed the threatened attack by presents and negotiations, and when it came defended himself with spirit. After several attacks had been repulsed, the English advanced guard, which had marched four hundred miles in twenty-three days, appeared on the scene, and the siege was raised. So great was the terror inspired by the approach of Clive that the Shahzada decamped in haste and recrossed the Caramassa. His force soon broke up,

and the unhappy prince, deserted by the Nawab of Oude and abandoned by all except three hundred faithful followers, threw himself upon the generosity of the English. Clive, feeling that the presence of a man of such high rank in the province would expose it to continual disturbance, sent him a present of £1000, and wrote: "I have received repeated orders from the Vizier, and even from the King, not only to oppose your Highness, but even to lay hold of your person. I am sorry to acquaint your Highness with these disagreeable things, but I cannot help it. Were I to assist your Highness in any respect, it would be attended with the ruin of this country. It is better that one should suffer, however great, than that so many thousands should be rendered unhappy. I have only to recommend your Highness to the Almighty's protection. I wish to God it were in my power to assist you, but it is not. I am now on my march to the Caramassa, and earnestly recommend it to you to withdraw before I arrive there."

After reducing the Rajput and hill chiefs who had supported the Shahzada, Clive returned to Moorshedabad. When he left Patna the storm had cleared away. Wherever he went he established a reputation for valour and moderation, and his remarkable success was due as much to the personal reliance which all classes of natives placed upon him as to the prestige of the British arms. At Delhi his policy produced the most favourable impression. The Padishah sent his congratulations with an elephant, a dress of honour, and a tiara such as was usually given to persons of the highest rank; and the Vizier invited him to establish a factory at the capital. To Meer Jaffier the dispersion of

the storm was as the gift of life to a drowning man, and he hastened to show his gratitude. Clive had been created an Omrah of the Empire in the previous year, but no *jagir* had been assigned to him for the support of the dignity. The omission was now supplied by the Nawab, who granted him the quit-rent, amounting to £30,000 a year, paid by the Company for the lands ceded to them near Calcutta. The grant afterwards gave rise to much discussion, but of all the sums received by Clive it seems the least open to objection. There was no bargain, no extortion, and no concealment: the gift was in accordance with native custom, and not forbidden by the rules of the Company; and, though Meer Jaffier may have felt that a peace-offering was necessary after his vacillating conduct during the autumn of 1758, it was ostensibly given for great and undoubted services. Clive would never have consented to an arrangement under which the Company was to pay his *jagir* if he had suspected that any moral or legal objection could be raised to his acceptance of the gift. His conduct was straightforward throughout; whether it was politic is another question. If he sinned it must be remembered to his credit that his bitterest foe never accused him of receiving money from corrupt sources; and that during his second administration of Bengal he fully atoned for any faults he may have committed in his first.

Shortly after Clive's return from Patna a new and unexpected danger arose. In November 1758 Meer Jaffier, irritated by Clive's protection of Roydullub, made secret overtures to the Dutch to bring such a force into Bengal as would counterbalance the power of the English. The Dutch, whose trade had been seriously injured by the

ascendency of the English, soon came to terms, and quietly collected ships and troops at Batavia. After Clive's campaign against the Shahzada, Meer Jaffier appears to have felt some scruples at the part he was playing, for he told Warren Hastings in July 1759 that the Dutch were in league with the Nawab of Oude, and that the expedition they were fitting out was destined for Chinsurah. Early in October seven Dutch ships, filled with European and Malay soldiers, anchored at the mouth of the Hooghly, and Meer Jaffier's behaviour immediately afterwards convinced Clive that he had given the Dutch permission to bring the troops up to Chinsurah if they could. He at once prepared to resist any attempt to force a passage by land or water, and a little later his suspicions of the Nawab's treachery were confirmed by letters from Warren Hastings. When the Dutch were ready they sent a memorandum to Fort William, in which, after recapitulating their grievances, they threatened reprisals if their boats were searched and the passage of their troops up the river obstructed. Clive referred them to the Nawab, under whose orders he said he was acting, and offered his friendly offices on their behalf. On receipt of this reply they threw off the mask, seized seven English vessels, tore down the British colours at Falta and Riapur, and burned the houses of the Company's agents. Clive had doubted how far he would be justified in opposing the troops of a Power at peace with England; his difficulty was now removed. Believing that the Dutch had heard of a rupture between England and Holland, or that the Nawab had promised to join them, he at once took action. He divided his small force of three hundred

and twenty Europeans and twelve hundred sepoys into two detachments, and placed Forde and Knox, who had lately returned from the Deccan, in command. Forde was ordered to threaten Chinsurah; Knox was stationed in the batteries below Calcutta, to stop and search boats and vessels passing up the river. Fort William was garrisoned by two hundred and fifty European volunteers under Mr. Holwell; and Captain Wilson, who commanded three East Indiamen in the river, was ordered to anchor them above the batteries. The Nawab was told that the Dutch had commenced hostilities, and that he must not interfere in the quarrel.

On November 19th Forde occupied the Dutch factory at Barnagore, and crossing to the right bank of the Hooghly, moved on Chinsurah. On the 22nd the Dutch commodore landed seven hundred Europeans and eight hundred Malay soldiers, and dropped down the river to Melancholy Point. The Dutch troops were thus separated from their old base, the ships, and had to reach their new one, Chinsurah. Clive decided to destroy the two bases, and then crush the field force. On the 23rd he ordered Knox to join Forde; and Wilson "to demand immediate restitution of our ships, subjects, and property; or to fight, sink, burn and destroy the Dutch ships on their refusal." On the 24th Wilson made his demand and was refused. He had only three ships, mounting ninety guns, whilst the Dutch had seven, mounting two hundred and twelve. But he had caught something of Clive's indomitable spirit, and attacked without a moment's hesitation. After a sharp action of two hours six of the Dutch ships struck, and the seventh, whilst trying to escape, fell into the hands of two English ships

at the mouth of the Hooghly. The day this brilliant naval action was fought Forde defeated the garrison of Chinsurah, which had laid an ambush for him in the ruins of Chandernagore, and heard that the force landed from the ships was approaching. He hesitated to attack the troops of a friendly state without explicit instructions, and wrote to Clive that, if he had an order in Council, he could attack the Dutch with a fair chance of success. Clive was playing whist when the note arrived, and, without rising from the table, replied in pencil, "Dear Forde—Fight them immediately. I will send you the order of Council to-morrow." The action which followed on the plains of Biderra was short, bloody, and decisive. In less than half an hour the Dutch were completely defeated, and of their whole force only sixteen Europeans reached Chinsurah. The danger which threatened to be so serious was over; the Dutch sued for peace, and three days later Clive was obliged to protect them from Prince Meerun, who, seeing the turn affairs had taken, had come down with six or seven thousand horse. An amicable settlement was effected, under which the Nawab promised to protect Dutch trade, and the Dutch engaged never to maintain more than one hundred and twenty-five European soldiers in Bengal. In a separate treaty the Dutch "disavowed the proceedings of their ships below, acknowledged themselves the aggressors, and agreed to pay costs and damages;" and the English promised to restore the ships they had taken.

Clive's conduct throughout the critical period that followed the arrival of the Dutch fleet was marked by the greatest boldness and devotion to the interests

of his country. He wrote every order and instruction with his own hand, and when his friends pointed out the grave responsibility that he was incurring, he replied that "a public man may occasionally be called upon to act with a halter round his neck." Long afterwards he stated before the Select Committee that "he was sensible how very critical his situation was at that time; that he risked his life and fortune in taking upon himself to commence hostilities against a nation with whom we were at peace; but that he knew the fate of Bengal and of the Company depended upon it, and therefore he ran that risk." When he so acted, £180,000 of his private fortune was in the hands of the Dutch Company. In the hour of victory he was prudent, moderate, and generous. Special Commissioners of the two nations, appointed to investigate the whole matter in Europe, could find no fault with his conduct; and he received, as he well deserved, the unqualified approval of the Company and the Government.

Clive had long wished to retire and enjoy the fortune he had made; and he believed that he could serve British interests in India more effectually by returning to England than by remaining in Bengal. The rapid succession of events, and the belief that he alone could control them, had led him to postpone his departure; but he now felt that he could leave Calcutta without endangering the safety of his offspring. Major Caillaud's arrival with reinforcements had "put Bengal out of all danger but that of venality and corruption," and the only visible cloud on the horizon was the attitude of the Shahzada who had again invaded Behar. Clive did not attach much importance to the movement, and

ordered Caillaud to crush it before it gained strength. The real subject for anxiety was the internal state of Bengal. Meer Jaffier, though his treasury was drained by payments to the English, insisted upon maintaining a large army and leading a life of extravagance. The assessments he had imposed to pay for his elevation had alienated the hearts of the people and distressed the country. His son Meerun was ambitious, and suspected of wishing to upset his father and seat himself on the *musnud*. "What you write me about the young Nawab," Clive replies to Warren Hastings, "does not at all surprise me; it was what I always expected. Meer Jaffier's days of folly are without number, and he had, long before this, slept with his ancestors, if the dread of our power and resentment had not been his only security. Sooner or later, I am persuaded, that worthless young dog will attempt his father's overthrow. How often have I advised the old fool against putting too much power into the hands of his nearest relations." The native chiefs were inclined to resent the air of contemptuous superiority with which they were treated by the English; and the pretentious and fraudulent practices of the *gomashtas*, or native agents, of the Company's servants were already becoming a fertile source of disturbance. Europeans and natives were alike alarmed at the prospect of Clive's departure; and when he left "it appeared as if the soul was departing from the body of the government of Bengal." One of his last acts was to draft a letter to the Directors, in which he and four of his colleagues criticised, in the most outspoken manner, the despatch which they had recently received. Probably no governing body ever received from its subordin-

ates a letter couched in such insubordinate terms; and its receipt was followed by the dismissal of the four gentlemen who had signed it. This just and very natural action of the Directors was attended by unfortunate results, for it removed experienced civil servants at a critical moment, and left the control of affairs in the hands of younger and less moderate men.

On February 25th, 1760, Clive sailed for England. In December 1756, when he landed at Falta, the British were represented by a few fever-stricken fugitives; they were now courted by the Padishah, and regarded as the arbiters of the fate of India. The Company, which had been driven out of the country, was carrying on a flourishing trade; it had received £1,200,000 in hard cash, and a tract of land yielding an annual revenue of £100,000; rupees were coined at its mint in Calcutta; its merchants were revelling in wealth; its ruined settlement was fast becoming a City of Palaces; its Dutch rivals had been humbled; and its French rivals had lost everything they possessed in Bengal. This was the work of Clive. At the early age of thirty-four he had given an Empire to England; he was in the zenith of his fame, and was one of the wealthiest subjects of the British Crown.

Clive's action during his first tour of service in Bengal has been the subject of much hostile criticism. He appears to have been forced into it by circumstances which no one could have foreseen, and over which he had no control. After the recapture of Calcutta he would have been content with a fair amount of compensation, and the infliction of such a punishment on the Nawab as would have deterred him from again

attacking the British settlements. But he was kept in Bengal by the decision to attack Chandernagore, and the subsequent collision with the Nawab. The capture of Chandernagore, which proved to be the turning-point of British affairs in Bengal, was a necessary act of self-defence. England and France were at war; and Clive and Watson acted rightly in crushing the French. If Dupleix or De Bussy had been at Chandernagore, he would have joined the Nawab and driven the English out of the country. After the capture of Chandernagore the peace and safety of the English settlements demanded the removal of Surajah Dowlah from his throne; and Clive's action in seating Meer Jaffier in his place was fully approved by the Directors. But the means which he employed were unworthy of him. "Such expedients as fictitious treaties and counterfeited signatures are not," as Lord Stanhope justly remarks, "to be cleared by any refinements of ingenuity, or any consideration of State advantage, and they must for ever remain a blot on the brilliant laurels of Clive." After Plassey Clive's clearness of vision and boldness are alike remarkable. During the second expedition to Patna his high qualities as a soldier-statesman were conspicuous, and, when the Dutch attempted to introduce troops into Bengal, his prompt daring baffled all calculations. He saw more clearly than any one the future importance of Bengal, and, in all the changing circumstances of the time, he displayed a genius in dealing with political and administrative questions that was no less remarkable than his skill in the conduct of military affairs. Unfortunately he did not remain long enough in India to give consistency

to the settlement that he made. Having carried the revolution to a successful conclusion, he should have rendered others difficult, or impossible, by giving stability to the new government that he had called into existence. This he failed to do. The large sums withdrawn from Meer Jaffier's treasury rendered a stable native government impossible; and the disgraceful money transactions that accompanied his elevation to the *musnud* acted as an incentive to further revolutions when Clive's strong hand was removed. Nothing could have been more immoral than the private agreement with Meer Jaffier, or more impolitic than the exaction of a sum which he could with difficulty pay. The truth, perhaps, is that Clive was ambitious. He had been long enough in Parliament to acquire a knowledge of the manner in which votes and seats in the House of Commons were bought and sold; and he had returned to India with the firm determination to obtain such a fortune as would enable him to take a prominent part in home politics. In one of his earliest letters after Plassey, he writes, "I intend getting into Parliament, and have hopes of being taken some notice of by His Majesty"; and in another, "I will have no more struggles against Ministry; I choose to be with them." Clive was one of the coolest and most calculating men of his time, and knew exactly what he wanted. He was badly paid:[1] his commercial speculations were unsuccessful; and the Europeans round him, including the members of Council, were fervent preachers of the

[1] In later times a man in Clive's position would have received £30,000 a year, and a grant from the Company as large as that which Clive received from the Nawab.

gospel of plunder. After Plassey he was virtual master of Bengal, yet he only took the sum he had fixed upon as being sufficient to establish his political position in England. No native thought the amount too great: no one at the time thought of accusing him; and although his receipt of the money cannot be justified, he can scarcely be blamed for acting in the spirit of his age, or for following the example of De Bussy and Dupleix. Every one must regret that he allowed a sordid impulse to obscure the grandeur of his conquest, but it must not be forgotten that he never sacrificed the interests of his country to his own, and that he resolutely refused to accept all money that came from a corrupt source.

Clive, an apt pupil, had been trained in the school of the Carnatic war; and there is a striking resemblance between his action in Bengal and that of Dupleix in the south of India. The negotiations with the French and Surajah Dowlah, prior to the attack on Chandernagore, are very similar to those carried on by Dupleix with the English and Anwar-ud-din before the capture of Madras. The formation of an English party at Moorshedabad, followed by the agreement with Meer Jaffier, might almost have been copied from the policy adopted by Dupleix at the court of Nasir Jung. Clive was, however, entirely free from the insincerity and love of artifice that distinguished Dupleix, and he had no trace of that effeminacy which led the great Frenchman to delight in the splendour of oriental dress and ceremonial. There are some men, even at the present day, who are ready to maintain that in dealing with orientals it is justifiable to use the methods of the oriental; men who, in the eager pursuit of their object, would not hesitate to place

themselves on a level with the savage. But such views were never held by Clive. Although he once stooped to treachery and falsehood, he disdained evasion. In all his dealings with Europeans and natives he was open and straightforward, and he would have scorned to deal treacherously with an open foe. His ideal may not have been the highest, but, such as it was, he acted up to it, and it was infinitely higher than that of the men by whom he was surrounded. When his own interests and those of the Company came into conflict, he never hesitated to sacrifice his own; and we may rest assured that the man who wrote that "the English never desert a cause in which they have taken part," and translated his words into action, was not insensible to the honour of his country.

CHAPTER VIII

LIFE IN ENGLAND

CLIVE, on reaching England, was received with distinction by the King and the Ministry; and, notwithstanding the offence given by his last despatch, he was welcomed in a most flattering manner by Mr. Sulivan and the Directors. The estimation in which he was held by the authorities was shared by the country. Intelligence of his successes had arrived when the nation was smarting under recent disaster. The capture of Gheriah was spoken of as a brilliant feat of arms; and the greatest interest was excited by the rapid succession of victories in Bengal. The name of the man who, in a time of gloom and almost of despondency had redeemed the national reputation, was on every one's lips. The King, when asked, "whether the young Lord Dunmore might go as a volunteer to the army of the King of Prussia?" had replied, "Pshaw! what can he learn there? If he wants to learn the art of war let him go to Clive." Pitt, in his speech on the Mutiny Bill, had said "we had lost our glory, honour, and reputation everywhere but in India. There the country had a heaven-born general, who had never learned the art of war, nor was his name enrolled among the great officers

who had for many years received their country's pay. Yet was he not afraid to attack a numerous army with a handful of men."

Clive unfortunately was unable to take advantage of the first impression in his favour. Soon after his arrival a dangerous illness incapacitated him for business, and for twelve months it was a question whether he would live or die. To this cause must be attributed the smallness of his reward. He had expected an English peerage and the Order of the Bath; he received an Irish peerage and a promise of the red ribbon. When his health was restored he displayed the same vigour in prosecuting his plans that he had shown in India. Parliamentary interest being necessary, he bought boroughs, helped his friends in their elections, and took every means to obtain influence in the House of Commons. In eighteen months he had secured several followers who always voted with him, and had spent £60,000. His principal object in returning to England had been to procure the adoption of the measures which he considered necessary for the prosperity and security of India. He wished to obtain royal commissions as major-generals for the Governors of the three Presidencies, so as to put an end to the pretensions and independent powers of the King's officers. He had been much annoyed at the manner in which Forde had been superseded by Coote, and wanted to get the former appointed Commander-in-Chief in India. He had no hope of continued tranquillity, and was of opinion that a strong military force should be maintained. "Peace," he had written, "is the most valuable of all blessings; but it must be made sword in hand in this country if

we mean to preserve our possessions." He considered that the views of the Directors with regard to the Civil Service were not sufficiently enlarged; and was desirous that "servants of ability, and many of them," should be sent out. He was also most anxious that, when peace was made with France, the terms should be such as could be kept in India. He believed that the best means of securing the British position in Bengal was to obtain possession of the three provinces, and hold them under the Padishah for the Company, or, failing the Company, the Crown. In a letter to a friend (December 29th, 1758) he hinted at "great designs in view for the advantage of the Company." A little later he seems to have come to the conclusion that government by a Court of Directors in England was inexpedient, and that the Crown should assume the sovereignty and extend its authority as opportunity offered. His views are fully stated in a striking letter to Mr. Pitt (January 7th, 1759). After remarking on the advantages which the Company had obtained from the revolution, he observes:—

I have represented to them in the strongest terms the expediency of sending out and keeping up constantly such a force as will enable them to embrace the first opportunity of further aggrandising themselves; and I dare pronounce, from a thorough knowledge of this country government, and of the genius of the people, acquired by two years' application and experience, that such an opportunity will soon offer. The reigning *Subah* [Subadar], whom the victory at Plassey invested with the sovereignty of these provinces, still, it is true, retains his attachment to us, and probably, while he has no other support, will continue to do so; but Mussulmans are so little influenced by gratitude that should he ever think it his interest to break with us, the obligations he

owes us would prove no restraint. . . . Moreover, he is advanced in years, and his son is so cruel worthless a young fellow, and so apparently an enemy to the English, that it will be almost unsafe trusting him with the succession. So small a body as two thousand Europeans will secure us against any apprehension from either the one or the other; and, in case of their daring to be troublesome, enable the Company to take the sovereignty upon themselves.

He further tells Pitt that he had been offered by the Court at Delhi the post of Diwan, or collector of the revenue, of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, a position next in dignity and power to the Subadar. "But," he says—

This high office I have been obliged to decline for the present, as I am unwilling to occasion any jealousy on the part of the Subah, especially as I see no likelihood of the Company's providing us with a sufficient force to support properly so considerable an employ, and which would open a way for securing the subahship to ourselves. . . . But so large a sovereignty may possibly be an object too extensive for a mercantile company; and it is to be feared they are not of themselves able, without the nation's assistance, to maintain so wide a dominion. I have therefore presumed, sir, to represent this matter to you, and submit it to your consideration, whether the execution of a design that may hereafter be still carried to greater lengths be worthy of the Government's taking it into hand.

He adds that there would be little or no difficulty in obtaining possession of the three provinces, and suggests that the surplus revenue might be applied to the reduction of the national debt. In concluding this remarkable letter he predicts the failure of the French in the Carnatic:—

Notwithstanding the extraordinary effort made by the French in sending out M. Lally with a considerable force

the last year, I am confident before the end of this they will be near their last gasp in the Carnatic unless some very unforeseen event interpose in their favour. The superiority of our squadron, and the plenty of money and supplies of all kinds which our friends on the coast will be furnished with from this province, while the enemy are in total want of everything, without any visible means of redress, are such advantages as, if properly attended to, cannot fail of wholly effecting their ruin in that as well as in every other part of India.

Pitt considered Clive's plan practicable but "of a very nice nature" and difficult to carry out. The Company's charter would not expire for twenty years, and the judges on being consulted had decided that all conquests and acquisitions belonged to the Company and not to the Crown. A century was to elapse before Clive's view that the Crown should assume the responsibilities of government was adopted.

Clive had the greatest admiration of Pitt and his policy, and entered Parliament as one of his supporters. The favourable reception which the great minister had accorded to his views on India led him to hope that they would be adopted; but, soon after he became capable of attending to business, Pitt resigned (October 5th, 1761). He rejected all overtures from the government of Lord Bute; and, after voting for a time with the Opposition, attached himself in the closest manner to George Grenville. Clive never took a prominent part in English politics; his attention was almost wholly devoted to India. He appears at first to have had no intention of interfering personally in the affairs of the East India Company. His aim was to impose his views on the Directors by enlisting the sympathies of Pitt and cultivating Parliamentary interest. His illness and the acces-

sion of Lord Bute to office having rendered this scheme impossible, he determined to try to secure the election of Directors who would carry out his Indian policy. He was, however, obliged to be cautious; the Directors were jealous of any interference in the affairs of the Company, and he was afraid of provoking an attack on his title to his *jagir*. It was only when he found that secret attempts were being made to ruin his name and fortune that he threw himself heart and soul into the quarrels of the India House.

The affairs of the East India Company were administered by twenty-four Directors annually elected by the Proprietors assembled in General Court. Every holder of £500 of the Company's stock was entitled to vote in the Court of Proprietors, and every person holding £2000 stock was qualified to serve as a Director. The Court of Proprietors met once each quarter, and could be assembled at any time by a call of the Directors or by a requisition signed by nine of its members. Thirteen Directors formed a quorum, and when assembled became a Court at which the chairman or deputy chairman presided. The supreme power was vested in the Court of Proprietors, who made all laws and regulations, all determinations of dividend, and all grants of money. The Directors regulated political and commercial transactions, and controlled the government of India. The Court of Proprietors rarely interfered, and all power thus became centred in the chairman and the Directors. The Proprietors were at first men engaged in the Indian trade or wealthy city merchants; but when the Company became prosperous, and it was known that fortunes could be rapidly made in India, men of all ranks

endeavoured to obtain votes and acquire interest for themselves and their friends. The Government had no direct control over the affairs of the Company, but the power of granting or withholding naval and military assistance, and the disposal of the patronage of the Crown, gave ministers great weight both in the Court of Proprietors and the Court of Directors. This power was more frequently exerted to serve friends and acquire Parliamentary influence than to promote the interests of the Company and the country.

The constitution of the Company, framed with a view to trade, was little suited to the government of a great empire. When the line between commercial and political operations was first overstepped in India, the innovation was viewed with alarm. It was only gradually, as the victories of Clive opened wider prospects, that a change took place in the feelings of the Proprietors. One party gloried in the results of the military operations, another dreaded the wrath of the Great Mogul, a third was opposed to a policy of aggrandisement, and a fourth was eager to plunder those of their agents who had made large fortunes. The struggles of these parties for power led to the issue of contradictory orders, which rendered the task of administration in India well-nigh impossible. The Directors were supposed to be governed by personal motives rather than by considerations of duty. Public opinion was hostile to them, and Lord Anson bluntly told them that "in place of labouring for the interest of the Company and the nation, their sole aim seemed to be gratifying their private resentments, distressing His Majesty's service, and embroiling their constituents' affairs."

In 1757 the Directors, acting upon the advice of Mr. Holwell, approved of a government by rotation for Calcutta. The measure was strenuously opposed by Mr. Sulivan and others, who obtained its withdrawal by appealing to the Court of Proprietors, and afterwards at the general election in 1758 carried their own list of Directors in opposition to that officially submitted to the Proprietors. Mr. Sulivan forthwith became chairman, and obtained a commanding power and influence in the India House which he long retained. He was a man of considerable talent, clear but narrow views, and general rectitude of purpose; but he was dictatorial, full of prejudices, and jealous of any interference with the exercise of his power. His personal knowledge of India and its requirements gave him a great advantage over his colleagues, who had no experience except such as they had picked up in England, and he was determined to maintain his position by excluding from the Direction every one who had more knowledge than himself. Clive hoped that Mr. Sulivan would adopt his views, and requested his friends amongst the Proprietors to support their new chairman. Mr. Sulivan warmly congratulated Clive on his successes, and so long as the two men were at a distance from each other they carried on a most friendly correspondence. When, however, Clive, with his strong opinions, returned to England, a collision became only a question of time. Mr. Sulivan could not forgive the offensive tone of Clive's last despatch. He was jealous of the superior brilliancy of his position, of his welcome at Court, of his cordial relations with Pitt and the Ministry, and he was afraid of losing the ascendency which he had acquired in the administration of the Company. A struggle for

the control of Indian affairs commenced; and to restrain Clive's ambition Mr. Sulivan gave him to understand that the question of the title to his *jagir* was under consideration by the Select Committee. The hint was sufficient to keep Clive quiet, for, as he wrote, "my future power, my future grandeur, all depend upon the receipt of the *jagir* money. I should be a madman to set at defiance those who at present show no inclination to hurt me."

Clive's illness, and the fact that in 1762 Mr. Sulivan was out of the Direction by rotation, prevented a rupture for some time, but there was little cordiality between the two men. The first points of difference were the claims of the military officers who had served under Clive in India, and the rival merits of Coote and Forde. Before leaving India Clive had written to Forde: "If I do not get you a colonel's or lieutenant-colonel's commission, and an appointment of commander-in-chief of all the forces in India, I will from that instant decline all transactions with Directors and East Indian affairs;" and on reaching England he pressed Forde's claims, not always in temperate terms, on the Directors. Mr. Sulivan neglected the recommendation, and exalted Coote's fame in disparagement of that of Clive. The officers Clive disliked were promoted, whilst those he recommended were passed over. The mutual distrust was increased by political animosity. Mr. Sulivan was a follower of Lord Bute; Clive had declined the minister's overtures, and was consequently treated with coldness by the Government. So bitter was party feeling that Clive, whose knowledge of Indian affairs was greater than that of any man in England, was not con-

sulted during the negotiations for peace with France. He was, however, too patriotic and too much interested in India to withhold information that would be useful, and he transmitted a memorandum to Lord Bute, in which great stress was laid upon the necessity for limiting the number of men the French should be allowed to maintain on the Coromandel coast, and for prohibiting their readmission to Bengal except as merchants. His suggestions were adopted, and his conduct in coming forward in such circumstances to assist in improving the treaty greatly increased his popularity amongst the Proprietors.

Clive strongly disapproved of the peace, and voted in the minority against it in the House of Commons. Lord Bute was greatly annoyed, and attempted to lessen Clive's influence by encouraging Mr. Sulivan to attack his wealth and reputation. Clive was obliged to retaliate, and being determined to destroy his rival's power, he took steps to support the party of Mr. Rous in the Court of Directors, and came forward himself as a candidate for the Direction. It was customary at that time to increase the number of voters in the Court of Proprietors by "splitting votes," that is, by making fictitious transfers of stock in lots of £500 each. For the election in 1763 Clive purchased £100,000 of stock and divided it in this manner; and he advised his friends to do the same to the extent of their ability. He was supported by many noblemen and gentlemen, and by nearly all those who had served in India and their friends. Mr. Sulivan had in his favour the staff of the Company in England, the city merchants, and the shipowners connected with the Indian trade. Lord Bute

and ministers, wishing to punish Clive for his votes in Parliament, threw their whole weight into the scale against him. The contest, in which Clive should never have engaged, was carried on with the utmost bitterness. After the General Court in March, he was so certain of victory that he wrote to Vansittart: "I have no thought of ever accepting the chair; I have neither application, knowledge, nor time to undertake so laborious an employ. I shall confine myself to the political and military operations; and I think I may promise you shall have a very large military force in India, such a force as will leave little to apprehend from our enemies in those parts." At the election in April, however, the Ministers exerted their influence and he was defeated, much to his mortification, by a crushing majority.

Mr. Sulivan lost no time in taking his revenge. One of the first acts of the new Directors was to order the Bengal Government to discontinue the payment of Clive's *jagir*, and to carry the amount to the credit of the Company. The *jagir*, it will be remembered, was the quit-rent due to Meer Jaffier for the lands granted to the Company after Plassey. The rent was punctually paid by the Company till 1759, when Meer Jaffier assigned it to Clive, who thus became grantee of the rent under the same authority as the Company became grantee of the lands. If the Directors had then disapproved of the grant and ordered it to be restored to Meer Jaffier, they would perhaps have been within their right; but to confiscate and appropriate it after signifying their approval by acquiescing in the payments for four years, was neither right nor legal. Clive was not disposed to surrender without a struggle; and the Directors having

refused to give him a copy of the instructions they had sent to Calcutta, or supply him with information, he filed a bill in Chancery against them. He also warned the Government at Fort William that, in the event of their retaining the money, his agents had instructions to prosecute the Company in the Mayor's Court at Calcutta; and asked Major Carnac to obtain the confirmation of his right to the *jagir* from Meer Jaffier and the new Nawab. The Directors claimed no title to the *jagir;* they did not pretend that there was another claimant, and they assigned no valid reason for withholding payment. The most eminent lawyers of the day, including the Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General, were of opinion that the Directors had no case; and the Government of Bengal decided that if Clive's right to the *jagir* were extinguished, it should revert to Meer Jaffier, who had again been seated on the *musnud.* Clive would no doubt have made good his claims, but before the trial came to an issue the state of affairs in India altered his relations to the Court of Directors.

The complete disorganisation of the administrative service in Bengal, the anarchy and misery that prevailed in the province, the war with Meer Cossim, and the massacre at Patna had alarmed every one connected with India. The Proprietors, trembling for their dividends, and for the very safety of their eastern possessions, turned to Clive as the only man who could save them from ruin. At a very full General Court, held in March 1764, it was unanimously resolved that he should be requested to return to India; and a proposal was made that his *jagir* should be restored. Clive, who was present, rose, and after declining to take advantage of the

Hole; he was prejudiced against all Nawabs, and looked upon Meer Jaffier as the author of every evil that afflicted Bengal. He had no influence over Meer Jaffier, who with oriental quickness discovered his character and regarded him with distrust. The friction that naturally arose was increased by the financial necessities of the Government. The idea of providing for the future had never occurred to any one. As long as the Plassey treasure lasted all went well; directly it failed the Government found itself surrounded by difficulties. It was obliged to suspend its trade, and was unable to pay its troops. The Nawab's treasury was exhausted, and his revenues were wasted by frauds and swallowed up by the demands of a rabble army. The subsistence allowance to the Company's troops in his service was two or three months in arrear, and his own unpaid soldiers were in a chronic state of mutiny. The only remedy for these evils which suggested itself to Mr. Holwell was a change of Nawabs; but before he could take action the new governor arrived. Mr. Vansittart had been appointed on the recommendation of Clive. He was honest, well-meaning, and disposed to carry out his predecessor's policy, but he was wanting in self-reliance and firmness, and having openly adopted Mr. Holwell's views, became little more than the mouthpiece of his Council. He was soon called upon to act. Circumstances had given to the Shahzada's invasion of Behar an importance which Clive had not foreseen. The Emperor was murdered at Delhi, and the Shahzada, having proclaimed himself Padishah under the name of Shah Alum, appointed the Nawab of Oude his Vizier. He continued his advance, and after obtaining a first success over Ram Narain,

generous enthusiasm of the Court, stated that he would make certain proposals to the Directors with regard to his *jagir*, which he trusted would lead to an amicable arrangement. He concluded by remarking that he could not undertake the government of Bengal if Mr. Sulivan, who was known to be his personal enemy and whose views on Indian affairs differed completely from his own, continued to occupy the chair. Mr. Sulivan, on rising to reply, could scarcely obtain a hearing, and when he attempted to try the result of a ballot he could not find nine Proprietors willing to sign the necessary requisition. Clive was forthwith nominated Governor and Commander-in-Chief in Bengal; but he refused to embark until the result of the election, on April 25th, 1764, was known. When the day arrived the contest was warm, but Clive triumphed. The election of Mr. Sulivan was only carried by one vote; and the chairman and his deputy were friends of the new governor. Clive's right to his *jagir* was confirmed for ten years, and in the following year his friends succeeded in so strengthening their position on the Direction that they were able to give him steady support whilst reforming the administrative service of Bengal. To understand the nature of Clive's reforms, and the important services which he rendered to his country during his last visit to India, it is necessary to review the events which had occurred during his absence.

When Clive left Calcutta Mr. Vansittart, his successor, had not arrived, and the Government was carried on by Mr. Holwell, the senior member of Council. Mr. Holwell could never forget his sufferings in the Black

was defeated by Caillaud and Knox. In the midst of these events Prince Meerun, Meer Jaffier's heir, was killed by lightning, July 2nd, 1760, and his death brought on a crisis in the affairs of Bengal.

On September 27th Mr. Vansittart concluded a secret treaty with Meer Cossim, son-in-law of Meer Jaffier, under which it was agreed that the Government of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa should be transferred to the former, and that he was to be supported by the Company's troops. Meer Jaffier received no hint of the proposed transfer until the middle of October, when Vansittart and Caillaud went to Moorshedabad to persuade him to resign. On his refusal to accept an arrangement which would have proved his death warrant, he was deposed and Meer Cossim was seated on the *musnud.* As a mark of his gratitude Meer Cossim presented the Select Committee with £200,000, and of this sum Mr. Vansittart, who was drawing a salary of £18,000, and was carrying on private trade, received £28,000. The revolution effected with so much ease was unnecessary and unjustifiable. The Bengal Government broke their solemn treaty with Meer Jaffier without any previous negotiation, and without an attempt to remedy the evils of which they complained.

The English and Meer Cossim at once took the field against the Padishah and his Vizier. The latter were defeated, and on February 6th, 1761, Shah Alum surrendered himself to the English, who allowed him, after a short detention at Patna, to proceed to Oude. Before leaving he offered the *diwani* of the three provinces to the Government, and proposed that they should conduct him to Delhi and seat him upon the imperial throne.

The offer of the *diwani* was declined, but the proposed march to Delhi found many advocates; and the scheme was only abandoned from want of means and the disinclination of the Nawab to assist. During the Padishah's stay at Patna Meer Cossim was formally appointed Nawab. He was a strong-willed, energetic man of much ability, who, from the moment of his elevation, determined to free himself from English control. Mr. Vansittart's attitude towards him was the reverse of that of Clive towards Meer Jaffier. He did not realise the change that had taken place in the relations between the English and the native princes; and adopted the policy of an independent Nawab, and non-interference with his affairs.[1] He advised Meer Cossim to regulate his finances, to organise and drill his army, and to pay his soldiers well and regularly. He allowed him to withdraw to Monghir, beyond the reach of English influence, and abandoned to him the rich Hindus who had been friendly to the British. Worst of all, in spite of the protests of Carnac and Coote, he withdrew the protection which Clive had guaranteed to Ram Narain, and gave him up to the Nawab, by whom he was afterwards murdered. Meer Cossim was quick to take the advice offered to him. He reformed his finances; paid the arrears due to the Company's troops; and, in the quietude of Monghir, raised and trained an army which afterwards fought against the English with determined bravery. Mr. Vansittart's policy must eventually have led to hostilities; but it is probable that Meer Cossim would have long hesitated to draw the sword if the English had not provoked him by

[1] A similar policy in the Madras Presidency led to the defection of the celebrated commander of sepoys, Mahomed Essuf.

acts that would have driven the mildest of mortals to resistance.

The appointment of Mr. Vansittart, a Madras man, was ill received by the Bengal civil service. A party hostile to the new governor was formed, and he was soon left with a single supporter, Warren Hastings, in the Council. Amongst the many changes at this period, Mr. Ellis, a man of violent temper and no tact, became head of the factory at Patna, and by his treatment of the native authorities and open hostility to the Nawab, soon brought on a crisis. One of the principal causes of quarrel was the abuse of the right of private trade. The civil servants of the Company, who received almost nominal salaries, were permitted to engage in private trade, and to adopt the native customs of receiving presents from inferiors and accepting fees and perquisites. They consequently became tainted with the oriental predilection for illegal gain, and a general atmosphere of pecuniary immorality pervaded the service. The evils of the practice had been pointed out as early as the reign of James the First by Sir Thomas Roe; but the Directors adhered to the vicious system of low salaries and unlimited licence to trade.

The internal trade of India was obstructed by the manner in which the tolls and duties were levied. On all roads and rivers there were toll and custom-houses, at each of which goods in transit were stopped until the duties had been paid and the collectors satisfied. The imports and exports of the Company, when protected by the English flag and the Company's *dustuck*, or permit, were allowed to pass free of duty; but this concession did not benefit the civil servants who, so long as

the Nawabs were powerful, were not permitted to engage in the inland trade of the interior. After Plassey, however, when the English became all-powerful, they tried to break through every restraint. During Clive's first administration such attempts were rare, but, directly his strong hand was removed, there was a general rush of all classes to take part in the internal trade of the country. Every one traded, from the Governor to the junior clerk; and the duties of governing were neglected in the pursuit of wealth. They openly traded in salt, betel-nut, tobacco and other native commodities; and used the Company's *dustuck* to cover their private adventures. If a collector questioned the power of the *dustuck*, and stopped their goods, he was seized by sepoys, flogged, and thrown into prison. The civil servants soon acquired a monopoly of the internal trade and amassed large fortunes, while the Directors were obliged to reduce their dividends, and the Nawab's revenue rapidly diminished.

The trade monopoly was bad, but the conduct of the *gomashtas*, or native agents employed by the Company's servants, was worse. They assumed the dress of English sepoys, and imprisoned *ryots* and merchants who would not sell to them at less than the market price, or buy their goods at five times their value. Every *gomashta* thought himself "no less than the Company." Native merchants "found it expedient to purchase the name of any young writer in the Company's service by loans of money, and under this sanction harassed and oppressed the natives. So plentiful a supply was received from this source that many young writers were enabled to spend £1500 and

£2000 per annum, were clothed in fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day." It was robbery rather than trade, no Tartar horde could have wasted the country more completely; and, so great was the terror of the English and their agents that, at the mere rumour of their approach the people deserted their villages and fled to the jungle. Well might the historian of the day exclaim, "O God! come to the assistance of Thy afflicted servants, and deliver them from the oppressions which they suffer." And it was not without reason that the Directors regarded "the inland trade as the foundation of all the bloodshed, massacres, and confusion which have happened of late years in Bengal."

The Governor, with only one supporter in the Council, was powerless. He attempted to remedy the evils by a treaty with the Nawab, but the Council passed a vote of censure upon his action, and forbade compliance with the arrangements he had made. They also compelled him to explain to the Nawab that he was only their organ, and issued orders that any obstruction to their trade should be repelled by force. Meantime Meer Cossim, having put the treaty in force, resisted the extravagant demands of the traders, and collisions occurred in all parts of the country. He appealed to the Governor, and, obtaining no redress, broke up the iniquitous trade-monopoly by abolishing all duties for two years. The majority of the Council were furious at his action, and pronounced it to be a violation of the Company's rights and equivalent to a declaration of war. So lost were they to all sense of justice and decency that they insisted on the Nawab's revoking his order, and imposing duties upon all goods but their own. This selfish

policy was approved by every member of Council with the honourable exceptions of Vansittart and Warren Hastings. An unprovoked attack on the city of Patna by Mr. Ellis (June 24th, 1763) brought on the long threatened crisis.

Meer Cossim had for some time been convinced that the Council were determined to depose him, and had prepared for war. When he heard of the capture of Patna his anger knew no bounds, and his subsequent conduct was influenced by a blind fanatical hatred of Englishmen. Patna was retaken by his troops, and a few days later Mr. Ellis and the garrison were defeated and made prisoner. The Council, on hearing of Meer Cossim's success, declared war against him, and proclaimed Meer Jaffier Nawab. Meer Jaffier paid dearly for the honour, for he was bound by treaty to levy duties upon all goods except those of the Company's servants, and to pay the Company £300,000 on account of their losses, to give a donation of £250,000 to the army and navy, and to reimburse the personal losses of individuals. The last item, originally fixed at £100,000, was eventually raised to £530,000; and we are told by Mr. Scrafton "that all delicacy was laid aside in the manner in which payment was obtained for this sum, of which seven-eighths was for losses sustained in an illicit monopoly of the necessaries of life, carried on against the orders of the Company and to the utter ruin of many thousands of the India merchants; that of the whole one half was soon extorted from him, though part of the payments to the Company was still undischarged, and though the Company was sinking under the burden of the war, and obliged to borrow great sums of money

of their servants at eight per cent interest." Clive declared in one of his speeches that the Company had become possessed of one half of the Nawab's revenue; and that though Meer Jaffier was allowed to collect the other half for himself, he was "no more than a banker for the Company's servants, who could draw upon him as often and to as great an amount as they pleased." It is impossible to conceive a more disgraceful transaction than the enforced payment by Meer Jaffier of compensation for losses sustained through the action of Meer Cossim, who had been placed in power by the English and then driven to resistance. Meer Cossim was defeated by Major Adams in three hard-fought battles, and obliged to take refuge with Shujah Dowlah, the Nawab-Vizier of Oude. His last act of despairing revenge was to order the massacre of Mr. Ellis and all his prisoners. After a long campaign Shujah Dowlah was signally defeated by Major Monro at Baxar; and (May 27th, 1765) on receiving intelligence of Clive's return, he threw himself upon the clemency of the British.

Meer Jaffier did not long survive his restoration. He died early in February 1765, a few months before the arrival of Clive, to whom he left a legacy of £50,000. On his death there were two claimants to the throne—his natural son, Nujum-ud-Dowlah, aged twenty, and his grandson, a lad of six. Mr. Spencer, who had succeeded Mr. Vansittart, and the Council were eager to make fortunes by installing a new Nawab before Clive arrived; and having decided in favour of Nujum-ud-Dowlah they sent a deputation under Mr. Johnston to arrange terms. The result was a treaty which completely changed the

relations between the English and the native government. The Nawab agreed to appoint a Deputy-Nawab, to conduct the civil administration of the country, and to select for the post Mahomed Reza Khan, a Moslem noble of great talent. He also engaged to pay £50,000 a month towards the cost of the army; and to maintain only such troops as were necessary for purposes of State. Although positive orders from the Directors against receiving presents had reached Calcutta before the death of Meer Jaffier, £200,000 was divided amongst the Governor and Council.

Clive, in consenting to return to India, appears to have been animated by a sincere desire to promote the interests of his country. He was reluctant to leave his family and his friends; he still suffered from nervous attacks and fits of depression; and personally he had little to gain by undertaking the mission. "Do you think," he writes after reaching Calcutta, "history can furnish an instance of a man with £40,000 per annum, a wife and family, a father and mother, brother and sisters, cousins and relations in abundance, abandoning his native country and all the blessings of life to take charge of a government so corrupt, so headstrong, so lost to all principle and sense of honour as this is?" He was well aware of the difficulties he would have to encounter, but he felt that he alone could restore order, and he cheerfully gave up the comforts and pleasures of home life at the call of duty. He strongly disapproved of the revolution which placed Meer Cossim on the throne; but considered that, after it had become an accomplished fact, every one should have given it hearty support, and he blamed his friends for opposing Vansittart. Before leaving England

he submitted his views on the general policy to be adopted to the Directors. The principal object, he wrote, should be to restore the confidence of the natives in the English, which had been lost by the deposition of Meer Jaffier, the withdrawal of the guarantees from the Hindu nobles, and the war with Meer Cossim. The policy towards the Nawab should be one of moderation. He should not be allowed to be independent, for "the princes of the country must in great measure be dependent on us or we totally so on them." But he should be "treated with respect, and with that honour which ought to be characteristic of Englishmen in Asia as well as in Europe." Clive was opposed to any extension of territory except under the pressure of necessity; for, he remarks, "if ideas of conquest were to be the rule of our conduct, I foresee that we should by necessity be led from acquisition to acquisition until we had the whole Empire against us." The trade in salt, betel-nut, and tobacco ought, in his opinion, to be restored to the Nawab; and the Governor, Council, and civil servants to be absolutely forbidden to take part in it. And to remove the dissatisfaction that such restrictions to private trade would cause, he proposed to give up to the Council "the Governor's portion of commercial advantages;" and he pledged himself "not to enrich himself one farthing by any pay or emoluments he might receive." He attached special importance to a reorganisation of the army as the only means of reducing the military expenditure that was swallowing up the revenues of the Company. His view was that a force of not less than three thousand Europeans should always be maintained in Bengal, and that it should consist of three battalions of infantry,

four companies of artillery, and a regiment of light horse. The force was to be organised, with the sepoy regiments, in three brigades, and for recruiting purposes there were to be two depot battalions in England. He saw the evil of three independent Presidencies, and wished to revert to the earlier system under which captains-general had been appointed with supreme control over all the Company's possessions in India. The Governor-General, when appointed, "ought to be established in Bengal, as the greatest weight of your civil, commercial, political, and military affairs will always be in that province."

Clive had been appointed President and Governor of Bengal and Commander of the Forces. He wished also to have the power, a very necessary one while communication between England and India was in its infancy, of acting when requisite on his own responsibility. The Directors considered this power, afterwards vested in Indian governors, too great for one man, so, by way of compromise, they appointed a Select Committee, composed of Clive and four members nominated by him, and authorised it to assume all the powers of Government and act without consulting the Council. They also made some preparation for the reforms which were to be carried out by issuing orders[1] that all their servants, civil and military, should at once execute covenants, binding themselves, on pain of dismissal, to pay to the Company all presents which they might receive above four thousand rupees, and not to accept any present under that amount without the permission of the President and

[1] The orders reached Calcutta on January 24th, 1765, before the death of Meer Jaffier.

Council. In a letter, dated February 8th, 1764, they ordered the grievances of the Nawab to be redressed, and all inland trade to cease; but, in consequence of a resolution of the Court of Proprietors on May 18th, they subsequently instructed Clive (June 1st), "after consulting the Nawab, to form a proper and equitable plan for carrying on the inland trade."

CHAPTER IX

SECOND ADMINISTRATION OF BENGAL

CLIVE left England on June 4th, 1764, with the views and powers described above. On April 10th, 1765, he reached Madras, and there heard of the death of Meer Jaffier, an event which completely altered the position in Bengal. In a private letter to Mr. Rous, the Chairman of Directors, he writes: "We have at last arrived at that critical period *which I have long foreseen*, I mean that period which renders it necessary for us to determine whether we can or shall take the whole to ourselves. Jaffier Ali Khan is dead, and his natural son is a minor, but I know not whether he is yet declared successor. Shoojah Dowlah is beat from his dominion; we are in possession of it, and it is scarcely hyperbole to say, to-morrow the whole Mogul Empire is in our power. . . . We must indeed become Nawabs ourselves, in fact, if not in name, perhaps totally so without disguise, but upon this subject I cannot be certain until my arrival in Bengal" (April 17th, 1765). Clive now decided to place Meer Jaffier's grandson, a child of six, on the throne, and to rule in his name under the authority of the Padishah. At the same time he wrote secretly to his London agent to invest in East India stock "whatever money I have

in the public funds or anywhere else, and *as much as can be borrowed in my name.*" The transaction, taken in connection with the letter to Mr. Rous, has the appearance of an abuse of official intelligence; but he declared, when examined on the subject by the Committee of the House of Commons, "that he had not, whilst at Madras, formed the resolution to seize the *diwani*"; and his object may have been to strengthen his position in the Court of Proprietors, and ensure that support from home which was so necessary to success.

Clive, with two members of the Committee, who had accompanied him from England, reached Calcutta on May 3rd, 1765. He was furious when he heard that Meer Jaffier's son had already been seated on the *musnud*, and openly expressed his opinion of the motives that had influenced those who had taken part in the transaction. He found the whole fabric of government in a state of dissolution. Anarchy, confusion, and corruption reigned supreme. The Governor had abdicated his functions, and his office had been "in a manner hunted down, stripped of its dignity, and then divided into sixteen shares." "Would you believe," he remarks of Mr. Spencer, "that in his letters to the Nawab and others he has submitted to write, 'I and the Council'?" All the Council had been guilty of "barefaced corruption," and had been influenced by personal interests rather than by those of the Company or the State. The vacancies caused by retirements, dismissals, and the Patna massacre had raised to the higher ranks young men whose one thought was to enrich themselves. The Secretariat was in charge of a youngster of three years' service. The barrier between seniors and juniors was broken down, the latter resented

any censure of or interference in their pursuits, and young and old vied with each other in reckless extravagance. No man would undertake work which did not add to his fortune. Enormous sums were squandered on fortifications that were never completed. Men were charged for as being in hospital months after they were dead, and the prevailing corruption was greater than it had ever been under the direct rule of the native princes. The orders of the Directors in regard to private trade were ignored, and the whole country was plundered by *gomashtas*, who committed actions that made "the name of the English stink in the nostrils of a Hindu or a Mussulman." The army, European and native, had become mutinous and insubordinate. Ever since Clive's departure in 1760 the commanding officers had encroached more and more upon the civil power, and endeavoured to impress upon the minds of the native princes that supreme power was vested in the Commander-in-Chief, and not in the Governor and Council. So far had they gone in this direction that a few more months of Mr. Spencer's government would have made them "Lords Paramount." The dissensions in the Council and the attitude of the commanding officers had produced a relaxation of discipline amongst the officers which was reflected in the conduct of the men. A mutinous spirit had shown itself, and on more than one occasion it had broken out into open violence. Large numbers of European and native soldiers had deserted to the native powers, and a serious mutiny amongst the sepoys at Patna had only been quelled by blowing the ringleaders from guns.

The condition of affairs is thus described by Clive

in a letter to the Directors, dated September 20th, 1765:

Upon my arrival, I am sorry to say, I found your affairs in a condition so nearly desperate as would have alarmed any set of men whose sense of honour and duty to their employers had not been estranged by the too-eager pursuit of their own immediate advantages. The sudden, and among many the unwarrantable, acquisition of riches, had introduced luxury in every shape and in its most pernicious excess. These two enormous evils went hand in hand together through the whole presidency, infecting almost every member of each department. Every inferior seems to have grasped at wealth, that he might be enabled to assume that spirit of profusion which was now the only distinction between him and his superior. Thus all distinction ceased, and every rank became, in a manner, upon an equality. Nor was this the end of the mischief, for a contest of such a nature among our servants necessarily destroyed all proportion between their wants and the honest means of satisfying them. In a country where money is plenty, where fear is the principle of government, and where your arms are ever victorious, it is no wonder that the lust of riches should readily embrace the proffered means of its gratification, or that the instruments of your power should avail themselves of their authority, and proceed even to extortion, in those cases where simple corruption could not keep pace with their rapacity. Examples of this sort set by superiors could not fail of being followed, in a proportional degree, by inferiors. The evil was contagious, and spread among the civil and military, down to the writer, the ensign, and the free merchant.

The Select Committee also wrote of "transactions which seem to demonstrate that every spring of this Government was smeared with corruption, that principles of rapacity and oppression universally prevailed, and that every spark of sentiment and public spirit was lost and extinguished in the unbounded lust of unmerited wealth."

The spirit in which Clive entered upon his heavy task may be gathered from a letter to Carnac: "Alas!" he says, "how is the English name sunk! I could not avoid paying the tribute of a few tears to the departed and lost fame of the British nation (irrecoverably so, I fear). However, I do declare, by that Great Being who is the searcher of all hearts, and to whom we must be accountable, if there must be an hereafter, that I am come out with a mind superior to all corruption, and that I am determined to destroy those great and growing evils, or perish in the attempt."

Clive on landing had, as he expressed it, when afterwards defending himself, three paths before him:

> 1. One was strewed with abundance of fair advantages. I might have put myself at the head of the Government as I found it. I might have encouraged the resolution which the gentlemen had taken not to execute the new covenants which prohibited the receipt of presents; and, although I had executed the covenants myself, I might have contrived to return to England with an immense fortune, infamously added to the one before honourably obtained. 2. Finding my powers disputed, I might in despair have given up the commonwealth, and have left Bengal without making an effort to save it. Such a conduct would have been deemed the effect of folly and cowardice. 3. The third path was intricate. Dangers and difficulties were on every side. But I resolved to pursue it. In short, I was determined to do my duty to the public, although I should incur the odium of the whole settlement. The welfare of the Company required a vigorous exertion, and I took the resolution of cleansing the Augean stable.

Clive's first act on assuming the Government was to bring forward his scheme for the organisation of the army, and this was passed without criticism by the

Council. His next was to establish the supremacy of the Select Committee, whose powers were so loosely and jesuitically worded that they were immediately contested. The scene in the Council Chamber when the commission appointing the Committee was produced must be described in Clive's own words:

> Mr. Leycester then seemed inclined to enter into a debate about the meaning and extent of those powers, but I cut him short by informing the Board that I would not suffer any one to enter into the least discussion about the meaning of those powers, but that the Committee alone were absolutely determined to be the sole and only judges; but that they were at liberty to enter upon the face of the consultations any minutes they thought proper, but nothing more. Mr. Johnston desired that some other paragraphs of the letter might be sent to the different subordinates, etc., as tending, I believe, in his opinion, to invalidate those orders. Upon which I asked him whether he would dare to dispute our authority. Mr. Johnston replied that he never had the least intention of doing such a thing; upon which there was an appearance of very long and pale countenances, and not one of the Council uttered another syllable.

The first act of the Committee was to enforce the execution of the covenants relating to the reception of presents. Clive was indignant at the abuses which had accompanied the elevation of the young Nawab, and did not hesitate to express his opinion of the Council. They were "children and fools as well as knaves," and their behaviour had been "shameless, abandoned, and ungrateful." He was determined to show them no mercy, and declared that there were "not five men of principle in the whole settlement," and that there had been "a combination between the blacks and the whites to divide all the revenues of the Company

between them." His opponents justified themselves by quoting his own action after Plassey, and refused to admit that they had done wrong. They forgot that Clive had rendered great services to the Nawab and the Company; that his first interference in native affairs was not solely dictated by sordid motives, and that there was at the time no order against the receipt of presents. Clive's conduct was at any rate consistent. He steadily supported those who had helped him, and protected them not only from their native enemies but from the rapacity of the Company's servants. The Council were guided by personal motives and influenced by the desire of gain. Although they had rendered no services, they accepted presents after the receipt of positive orders forbidding them to do so; and they delayed the execution of the covenants until the money had been paid. All their measures failed. Every one who had befriended the English was ruined, and the word of an Englishman was no longer trusted.

At a later date Clive, when justifying his acceptance of Meer Jaffier's presents before the Select Committee of the House of Commons, stated that his idea of presents was as follows: When presents are received as the price of services to the nation, to the Company, and to that prince who bestowed these presents; when they are not exacted from him by compulsion; when he is in a state of independence, and can do with his money what he pleases; and when they are not received to the disadvantage of the Company, he holds presents so received not dishonourable: but when they are received from a dependent prince, when they are received for no services whatever, and when they are received not voluntarily,

he holds the receipt of such presents dishonourable. He never made the least secret of the presents he had received; he acquainted the Court of Directors with it, and they, who are his masters, and were the only persons who had a right to object to his receiving those presents, approved of it. Wedderburn, the Solicitor-General, was of opinion that the presents received by Clive were "justifiable both from the extraordinary circumstances of the case and from the known customs and usages of the country."

The Directors had been most anxious to put an end to the inland trade carried on by their servants and the *gomashtas*. It was opposed to the interests of the Company, and the vast fortunes acquired in it were obtained by "the most tyrannic and oppressive conduct that was ever known." Positive orders were issued that the trade was to cease, but no arrangements were made for compensating the civil servants by granting them fixed salaries on a liberal scale. When the orders reached Calcutta they were ignored, and Clive on his arrival found that nothing had been done to check the scandalous abuses. He at once proceeded to carry out the orders of the Directors. The civil servants were removed from the minor stations; all free merchants, excepting those who carried special licenses, were ordered down to Calcutta; the system under which the native agents traded free of duty was abolished; and the senior civil servants were compensated for the loss of their trade by distributing amongst them the profits of the salt monopoly. These measures caused great discontent, and the discussions in Council were heated; but Clive was no Vansittart. Messrs.

Gray and Johnston, members of Council, resigned to avoid an inquiry into their actions; Mr. Burdett was suspended; Mr. Leycester was dismissed; and severe measures were taken with the juniors, who are described as "young gentlemen just broke loose from the hands of their schoolmasters." The civil servants were thus reduced to obedience; but their slumbering animosity was revived when it became known, some months later, that an application had been made to Madras for assistance.

The young gentlemen of the settlement (Clive says) had set themselves up for judges of the propriety of our conduct, and the degree of their own merit; each would think himself qualified to transact your weighty affairs in Council at an age when the laws of his country adjudge him unfit to manage his own concerns to the extent of forty shillings. They have not only set their hands to the memorial of complaint, but entered into associations unbecoming at their years, and destructive of that subordination without which no Government can stand. All visits to the President are forbidden. All invitations from him and the members of the Select Committee are to be slighted. The gentlemen called down by our authority from Madras are to be treated with neglect and contempt. Every man who deviates from this confederacy is to be stigmatised and avoided. In a word, the members are totally to separate themselves from the head; decorum and union are to be set at defiance; and it becomes a fair struggle whether we or the young gentlemen shall in future guide the helm of Government. Look at their names, examine their standing, inquire into their services, and reflect upon the age of four-fifths of the subscribers to the bill of grievances, who now support the association, and you will be equally surprised with us at the presumptuous intemperance of youth, and convinced that a stop of three or four years in the course of promotion is indispensably necessary if you would have your Council composed of men of experience and discretion.

In the midst of his civil service reforms Clive found time to make an important change in the form of the Nawab's Government. He could not set aside Nujum-ud-Dowlah, whose incapacity for business was evident, without being guilty of a distinct breach of faith. But he restricted the power of Mahomed Reza Khan by associating with him two Hindu grandees, and by laying down that they were to act entirely under the orders of the Governor and Council. His attention was next turned to the affairs of the Padishah and the Nawab-Vizier of Oude, who had thrown themselves upon the mercy of the English, and to the heavy military expenditure that was threatening the Company with financial ruin. "Three important questions demanded settlement: The future status of Oude and the Nawab-Vizier; the future relations between the English and the Padishah; and the future relations between the Nawab of Bengal and the English on the one hand, and the Padishah on the other." Clive was opposed to any extension of the Company's possessions; his plan was to form Oude into a friendly "buffer" state between the three provinces and the Afghans and the Mahrattas; to firmly establish British ascendency in Bengal, Behar, and Orissa under the authority of the Padishah; and to recognise the imperial sovereignty by a fixed annual payment from the revenue of Bengal. He left Calcutta on June 25th, 1765, and on July 11th he was able to report that he had obtained the acquiescence of Nujum-ud-Dowlah and his ministers to an arrangement under which all the revenues of Bengal were to be appropriated to the payment of the sums due to the Company, the expenses of the army, and the tribute to the Padishah, with the exception of

£500,000, afterwards increased to £530,000, which was to be retained for the expenses of the Nawab. Nujum-ud-Dowlah's only remark on the arrangement was, "Thank God! I shall now have as many dancing girls as I please."

On August 2nd Clive met the Nawab-Vizier at Benares, and entered into an engagement with him which proved to be of an exceptionally durable character. Shujah Dowlah, on promising to pay £500,000 to the Company, was restored to all his possessions with the exception of the districts of Kora and Allahabad, which were reserved for the Padishah; and a defensive alliance was concluded between him and the English. Clive next proceeded to Allahabad and came to an agreement with the Padishah which may be regarded as the constitutional entrance of the Company into the affairs of India. Shah Alum appointed Nujum-ud-Dowlah Subadar, or Nazim, of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa; and granted the perpetual *diwani* of the same provinces to the Company on their engaging to pay him an annual rent of £260,000.[1] Under this arrangement the Company came into possession of the three provinces, which yielded an estimated revenue of more than three millions. They paid £260,000 to the Padishah and £530,000 to the Nawab; and provided for the defence of the country out of the surplus. The Nawab was thus reduced to the position of a pensioner and dependant of the Company. Shah Alum also acknowledged the title of the Company to their possessions in the Carnatic, made them a free gift of the northern

[1] At the *durbar* held on this occasion the Padishah used an English dining-table, covered over, as his throne.

Circars, and confirmed the grant of Clive's *jagir*. He tried at the same time to induce Clive to march to Delhi and replace him on the throne. This policy had been recommended in March 1762 by Eyre Coote and others, who considered that the English army was equal to the enterprise, and that "so glorious an opportunity of aggrandising the Company in Hindostan" should not be lost. Clive, however, believed that Shah Alum was not the man to rule in troublous times, and would not listen to the project. He advised the Padishah to live quietly in the Company's territory, and when he would not accept the advice, told him plainly that the Company would not assist him in any enterpri[illegible] their possessions.

Clive had next to contend with a formidabl[illegible] among the officers of the army. After [illegible] Meer Jaffier granted double *batta* to the En[illegible] at the request of Clive, who warned the officers at the time that the indulgence could not be continued. The Directors repeatedly sent most positive orders that it should cease, but the weak governments of Vansittart and Spencer were so completely overawed by the army, and so eager to share in any possible plunder, that the orders were never enforced. The officers thus came to look upon the indulgence almost as a matter of right. When the Company accepted the *diwani*, and the revenues of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa came into their hands, they determined to discontinue the double *batta*, and the Select Committee issued an order that it was to cease on January 1st, 1766.

The officers, though seeming to acquiesce, were determined to resist the order, and formed a secret league

to resign their commissions on June 1st. The plot was matured in the first, Sir R. Fletcher's, brigade, at Monghir, and afterwards communicated to the second and third brigades. The officers "bound themselves by an oath to secrecy, and to preserve, at the hazard of their own lives, the life of any one of their body who might be condemned by court-martial to death. In order to avoid the charge of mutiny, they determined to refuse the usual advance of pay for the month of June. Each officer bound himself separately by a bond of £500 not to accept his commission again if double *batta* were not restored." Subscriptions were raised for those who might be cashiered, and to this fund several of the civil servants and free merchants contributed. War with the Mahrattas was imminent, and the officers thought that their joint action at such a critical moment would enable them to force Clive's hand, and carry their point. They never made a greater mistake.

Clive first heard of the conspiracy on April 28th, and saw that, if it were not immediately suppressed, the government of the three provinces would pass into the hands of the army. "The ringleaders," he observed, "of this affair must suffer the severest punishment that martial law can inflict, else there is an end of discipline in the army, and of authority in the East India Company over all their servants!!" He was determined to restore order at all hazards: "I must see the soldiers' bayonets levelled at my throat," he writes, "before I can be induced to give way;" and he acted with rare energy and decision. He accepted all resignations, and ordered those who resigned to be immediately sent down to Calcutta; he placed the more

prominent offenders under arrest, and shipped them to England; called up officers from Madras, and gave commissions to deserving non-commissioned officers and soldiers. To Mr. Verelst, who was at Calcutta, he wrote, "Remember again to act with the greatest spirit; and if the civilians entertain the officers, dismiss them the service; and if the latter behave with insolence, or are refractory, make them all prisoners, and confine them in the new fort." The investigations having shown that Sir R. Fletcher was mixed up in the transaction, he was brought before a court-martial; and, being found guilty of wilfully concealing the plot for four months, was dismissed the service.

When order had been restored and authority vindicated, Clive acted with great leniency and indulgence, and showed no resentment. He reinstated those officers who regretted their hasty resignation, and petitioned to be restored to the service; and when told that two of the officers had declared their intention of assassinating him, he replied that the officers were Englishmen, and not assassins. In dealing with the mutiny Clive displayed his wonted firmness and decision. He never once swerved from his resolution to restore order; and in the height of the crisis his warm temper never betrayed him into a single act unworthy of his public or private character. No victory was ever more complete than that which he gained; and he always ranked it higher than any of his achievements in the field.

It has been mentioned that Clive placed the salaries of the senior civil servants on a proper footing, by appropriating the profits arising from a monopoly of the salt trade. Ample allowances for the senior army

officers, who had been permitted to increase their meagre pay by trade, were provided from the same source. Clive was of opinion that men in high position could not be expected to decline presents and forego the profits of private trade unless they were well paid; and he repeatedly, but fruitlessly, pressed his views upon the Directors. As the Court of Directors would not sanction the payment of adequate salaries from their territorial revenues, or from the profits of their trade, Clive adopted the mode of remuneration which, at the moment, seemed least open to objection. He very justly remarked afterwards that

> It was not expedient that the Company's servants should pass from affluence to beggary. It was necessary that some emoluments should accrue to the servants in general, and more especially to those in superior stations, who were to assist in carrying on the measures of Government. The salary of a councillor is, I think, scarcely £300 per annum; and it is well known that he cannot live in the country for less than £3000. The same proportion holds among the other servants. It was requisite, therefore, that an establishment should take place; and the Select Committee, after the most mature deliberation, judged that the trade in salt, betel-nut, and tobacco, under proper regulations, might effectually answer the purpose (*Speech in the House of Commons*, March 30th, 1772).

The question which Clive had to decide was, whether the evils arising from a monopoly were more to be dreaded than those which were known to accompany a badly paid civil and military service. The scheme that he devised may not have been the best possible; but it was fair to Europeans and natives, and had it been allowed to proceed, the renunciation of private trade

would have become compulsory. Unfortunately it did not meet with the approval of the Directors, and they refused to sanction it. This decision deprived the servants of the Company of their principal means of subsistence without substituting regular salaries in its place; and so prevented the complete success of Clive's second administration. It also led to a revival of abuses connected with private trade which did not disappear until many years later. There was a general increase of salaries. The letter in which the Directors communicated their disapproval to Clive only reached him in December, a month before he left for England. He had then been confined to his room for weeks by the severe illness which so nearly proved fatal; but he acted with his usual prompt decision, and confirmed the arrangement for a year, so as to give time for an appeal to the Directors. The two charges afterwards brought against Clive in connection with the salt trade—that he had disobeyed the orders of the Company in not abolishing the monopoly; and that, by taking a share of the profits as Governor, he had broken his promise not to trade, were fully answered in his speech in the House of Commons on March 30th, 1772. His accounts, which were laid before Parliament, showed that, so far from having added to his private fortune, he had expended £5816 : 16 : 9 more than his pay and emoluments.

Before leaving India Clive filled up the vacancies on the Select Committee, and laid before it an able State Paper, in which he explained the policy which in his opinion ought to be pursued. The Nawab, though nothing had been left to him but the name and shadow of authority, was to be treated with every mark of

distinction and respect. He was to be retained to satisfy foreign powers, and the distinction between him and the Company was to be carefully maintained. The Committee were not to be anxious to increase the revenue, especially when it could only be effected by oppressing the landholders and tenants. The export of silver from Bengal, which might produce consequences fatal to the Company, was to be vigilantly watched and regulated. All free traders were to be recalled from the interior, and the orders for the abolition of the salt trade were to be obeyed. "But," he adds, "as I am of opinion that the trade upon its present footing is rather beneficial than injurious to the inhabitants of this country, and that a continuation of this indulgence, or some equivalent, is become absolutely necessary, and would be an honourable incitement to diligence and zeal in the Company's service, I flatter myself the Court of Directors will be induced to settle some plan that will prove agreeable to your wishes." The Governor should assert his position as head of the Government, and make tours of inspection each season. "The people of this country," Clive says, "have little or no idea of a divided power; they imagine all authority is vested in one man. The Governor of Bengal should always be looked upon by them in this light, as far as is consistent with the honour of the Committee and Council. In every vacant season, therefore, I think it expedient that he take a tour up the country, in the quality of a supervisor-general. Frauds and oppressions of every sort being by this means laid open to his view, will, in a great measure, be prevented, and the natives preserve a just opinion of the importance and dignity of our president, upon whose

character and conduct much of the prosperity of the Company's affairs in Bengal must ever depend."

No wars were to be undertaken except in defence of our own, the King's, or the Nawab-Vizier's dominions, as stipulated by treaty; and a march to Delhi was especially deprecated. If the Nawab-Vizier of Oude proposed an expedition to Delhi and asked for English assistance, he was to be refused. "Should he, however, be prevailed upon by the King to escort his Majesty to that capital without our assistance, it will then be our interest to approve the project, as it is the only means by which we can honourably get rid of our troublesome royal guest." Terms of friendship were to be established with the Mahrattas of Berar; and, with a view of establishing free communication by land with Madras, *chout* was to be paid to their Rajah, Januji, on the condition that he appointed the Company Zamindar of Balasore and Cuttack. The Mahrattas of the Western Deccan were to be overawed by an alliance with Nizam Ali, the Subadar at Hyderabad. The Directors did not approve of Clive's foreign policy; they were of opinion that no security could be obtained by alliances with native princes, and entirely disapproved the idea of supporting the Subadar of the Deccan as a balance of power against the Mahrattas. Clive's parting advice to his colleagues is couched in words not unworthy of the man who in twenty months had raised the Bengal Provinces from the depth of degradation to the wealth and importance of an Empire.

It has been too much the custom in this Government to make orders and regulations, and thence to suppose the business done. To what end and purpose are they made, if

they be not promulgated and enforced? No regulation can be carried into execution, no order obeyed, if you do not make rigorous examples of the disobedient. Upon this point I rest the welfare of the Company in Bengal. The servants are now brought to a proper sense of their duty. If you slacken the reins of Government affairs will soon revert to their former channel; anarchy and corruption will again prevail, and, elate with a new victory, be too headstrong for any future efforts of Government. Recall to your memories the many attempts that have been made in the civil and military departments to overcome our authority, and to set up a kind of independency against the Court of Directors. Reflect also on the resolute measures we have pursued, and their wholesome effects. Disobedience to legal power is the first step of sedition; and palliative measures effect no cure. Every tender compliance, every condescension on your parts, will only encourage more flagrant attacks, which will daily increase in strength, and be at last in vain resisted. Much of our time has been employed in correcting abuses. The important work has been prosecuted with zeal, diligence, and disinterestedness; and we have had the happiness to see our labours crowned with success. I leave the country in peace. I leave the civil and military departments under discipline and subordination; it is incumbent on you to keep them so. You have power, you have abilities, you have integrity; let it not be said that you are deficient in resolution. I repeat that you must not fail to exact the most implicit obedience to your orders. Dismiss or suspend from the service any man who shall dare to dispute your authority. If you deviate from the principles upon which you have hitherto acted, and upon which you are conscious you ought to proceed; or if you do not make a proper use of that power with which you are invested, I shall hold myself acquitted, as I do now protest against the consequences.

The mental and bodily fatigue which Clive underwent while suppressing the military mutiny seriously affected his health. He had travelled much and rapidly during the monsoon and in the hottest season of the

year; "How should the *daks*, or the devil himself, overtake you travelling at such a rate?" writes Mr. Campbell to his secretary; and he had contented himself with no more than three hours' sleep a day. Towards the end of October he was attacked by a serious bilious disorder which, for more than a month, incapacitated him for business, and left permanent injuries to his constitution which seem to have finally hastened his end. The Directors pressed him to remain for another year, in a manner most flattering to his vanity and ambition; but he felt, as he wrote to Mr. Palk on December 20th, "that he could not survive and be of use to the Company in India another year." On January 16th, 1767, he attended a meeting of the Select Committee for the last time, and at the end of the month he embarked for England. He had intended travelling home overland with General Carnac, but the state of his health compelled him to return by sea.

The five years that followed Clive's departure from Calcutta in 1760 are the most shameful in the history of British India. Strong measures were necessary to put an end to abuses that his successors had more than tolerated, and he did not flinch from these in his effort to cleanse what he called the Augean stable. The services which Clive rendered to his country during his second administration have rarely been equalled,—they have never been surpassed. During the brief space of twenty months he reformed the civil service and increased its efficiency, after having suppressed a combination amongst the civil servants hostile to his policy. He reorganised the army and quelled a serious mutiny amongst the officers; concluded an advantageous peace

with the Nawab-Vizier of Oude; and acquired the *diwani* of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa for the Company, whereby they obtained a revenue of two millions, while the whole political power came into the hands of the English. He reduced expenses; paid off most of the Company's debts in India; checked misrule; set bounds to the cupidity of the ruling caste; and brought trade and commerce back into their wonted channels.

When Clive reached India the strongest human motives — love of power, love of reputation, love of money — were enlisted against him. He stood alone. Every one, from the senior member of Council to the last-joined clerk, was against him. He was often weary, often depressed, often sorely tried, but his iron will was never diverted from its object. "Let me," he writes, "but have health sufficient to go through with the reformation we intend, and I shall die with satisfaction and in peace." He shrank from nothing when he believed he was acting for the public good; and the strong measures he adopted created a host of powerful enemies. His reforms in the civil and military services, though they left them, after all reductions, the most liberally paid in the world, were the real cause of the virulent attacks made upon him after his return to England, and of the Parliamentary inquiry into his conduct. Had some of his schemes been adopted instead of being opposed by the Directors, the history of British India during the next few years would have been very different.

Clive's organisation and administration of the Indian army are remarkable proofs of his inborn military talent. His army reforms, especially those connected

with the amalgamation of the troops of the three presidencies in Bengal, increased the number of his enemies; and the stern measures which he was compelled to take in crushing the mutiny roused deep feelings of animosity, which found expression after his death in one of the most scandalous attempts to defame the memory of a brave man that have ever been published.

The native policy which Clive carried out was essentially one of expediency. The English knew nothing of the government of the country, and their attempt to rule Bardwan had shown how little fitted they were to undertake the responsibility of direct administration. When they espoused the cause of Meer Jaffier they committed an act of open rebellion against the Padishah; when they accepted the *diwani* the Company became an integral part of his tottering Empire. The outward form of the government remained the same as it had been under Aurungzebe. There was a Nawab Nazim who was responsible for the government and defence of the three provinces, and a Diwan who received and disbursed the annual revenue. There was none the less a real transference of power. Clive reduced the Nawab to a cypher by taking away his military power; and the Company, as Diwan, took possession of the surplus revenue, after paying Shah Alum £300,000 in place of the million pounds sterling that was sent to Delhi in the days of Aurungzebe. Clive attached special importance to the acceptance of *diwani* as the only means of putting an end to the flagrant corruption in the civil and military service, and to the constant collisions between the agents of the Company and the officials of the Nawab. The Select Committee very

pertinently remark in their letter of September 30th, 1765, to the Directors: "The experience of years has convinced us that a division of power is impossible without generating discontent and hazarding the whole —all must belong to the Company or to the Nawab. We leave you to judge which alternative is the most desirable and the most expedient in the present circumstances of affairs. . . . The more we reflect on the situation of your affairs the stronger appear the reasons for accepting the *diwani* of these provinces, by which alone we could establish a power sufficient to perpetuate the possessions we hold and the influence we enjoy." Another consideration which doubtless had its weight with Clive was the political state of Europe and India at the time. A premature assumption of power would have alarmed the native princes and led to complications with European Powers, and would have been contrary to the wish of the Directors and of the Government in England. On the other hand, no one could object to an arrangement under which the Company took over the annual revenue and left the people to the tender mercies of the Nawab. The policy of non-interference with the native administration was, however, an impossible one, and it was modified before Clive left India by the appointment of English supervisors to check the native collectors of revenue. This step was one in the right direction, though unfortunately several of the early supervisors became as bad as the natives they were sent to control.

Clive's efforts to reduce expenses were successful; but his attempt to regulate the rate of exchange between the gold and silver coinage of Bengal was unfortunate. After the Company took over the *diwani* they em-

ployed the large surplus revenue in purchasing goods in India and China, and the result was that the three provinces were soon drained of rupees. Clive tried to meet the difficulty by establishing a gold currency, and by fixing a premium upon gold. The remedy only increased the evil by causing more silver to be withdrawn from circulation. Merchants and retail traders were greatly inconvenienced, but the full effect of the meas was only felt after Clive left India, when the e bullion from Bengal exceeded five millions sterl the exchange value of the rupee went up to two shil and sixpence. The failure is scarcely surprising, when it is remembered that Clive had had no experience of finance, and that the science of exchange was, as he acknowledged, "a subject very much out of his sphere."

Clive's foreign policy was successful. His moderation in the hour of victory, and his strict observance of treaties, won the confidence of the native princes. Oude long remained a barrier between Bengal and the Mahrattas, and his generosity in restoring it to the Nawab-Vizier removed the general anxiety that was at first felt at the English successes. The attempt to hold aloof from the affairs of the neighbouring states was doomed to failure, and before Clive left he had proposed that the English should enter into an alliance with the Nizam of Hyderabad against the Mahrattas of the Western Deccan, and that they should reconcile the Mahrattas of Berar by the payment of *chout*.

CHAPTER X

THE PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY AND LAST YEARS IN ENGLAND

CLIVE landed at Portsmouth on July 14th, 1767, and the following day reached London. He was warmly received by his numerous personal friends and by the Court of Directors. But the causes that embittered the remainder of his days were already at work, and the acclamations of his countrymen, which had greeted him on previous occasions, were wanting. Mr. Sulivan and his enemies at the India Office were still actively hostile, and they had been joined by all who had suffered even indirectly by his reforms, or had been disappointed in their expectations of wealth. Newspapers were hired or set up to abuse him, and an extraordinary impression was produced upon the public mind by scurrilous pamphlets which circulated incredible stories of his cruelty and rapacity. He had to bear the odium of all the abuses which he had put down, and was popularly believed to possess the worst vices of the men whose conduct of affairs in India had roused the honest indignation of every Englishman. Mr. Johnston and others, who had been dismissed or had resigned the Company's service in consequence of his

reforms, purchased India stock with the sole object of revenging themselves upon the man who had put an end to their peculations. They soon formed a strong party in the Court of Proprietors, and, at a General Court held on May 6th, 1767, forced the Directors to raise the dividend to twelve and a half per cent, and carried against them a motion of indemnity to those members of the Bengal Council who had received presents in violation of the orders from home. The latter decision was a severe blow to the authority of the Court of Directors and to the good government of India. It was an intimation to the Company's servants that if they had influential friends at home they might set all orders and regulations at defiance; and the lesson was not lost.

Before Clive left England the attention of the country had been forcibly directed to Indian affairs, and when news arrived of the advantages obtained for the Company by his successful negotiations, the question arose whether the nation should not be admitted to share in them. Clive had always been in favour of State control, and Pitt, to whom he had communicated his opinion, was disposed to take the same view, though he was very sensible of the many legal and political difficulties involved in the question. Soon after the formation of Lord Chatham's administration in July 1766 the Directors were informed that the affairs of the Company would probably be brought before Parliament, and a motion for an inquiry into them was brought forward by Alderman Beckford on November 25th, 1766. Committees were appointed, evidence was taken, and numerous debates followed. But the Government,

though apparently of opinion that the right to the territorial acquisitions of the Company belonged to the Crown, were silent. Lord Chatham was unable to attend to business; his opinions on Indian affairs were shrouded in impenetrable mystery, and his colleagues did not venture to propose any important measure in his absence. Lacking the courage to transfer the territorial sovereignty to the Crown, Government passed an Act, June 12th, which compelled the Company to purchase a continuance of their rights by paying £400,000 a year into the Exchequer. They also by a separate Act fixed the dividend at ten per cent.

During the debates both sides had concurred in praising Clive's conduct and services, and about two months after his return the Court of Proprietors, by a unanimous vote, granted the *jagir* to him and his representatives for an additional term of ten years. The proposal to extend the term of the *jagir* had been brought forward at a previous meeting before Clive reached England, and through some misunderstanding the motion had then been carried by the small majority of twenty-nine. Clive appears to have considered his friends lukewarm, and to have been greatly annoyed at the action of the Court of Directors in the matter. He therefore exerted himself to secure an ascendency in the Court of Proprietors, and, unfortunately for his future peace and comfort, allowed himself to be drawn once more into the turbid stream of Leadenhall Street politics. Far better would it have been had he followed the sound advice of his friend George Grenville to keep himself "in the honourable state of a public man; only contributing his advice and assistance when asked to preserve to

this country that great Empire which he had so great a share in acquiring."

He had returned with ruined health and a broken constitution, and he was irritated beyond measure by the petty annoyances to which he was exposed. At Birmingham, and again at Styche, he had serious illnesses, accompanied by excruciating pain which he sought to relieve by large doses of opium. His doctors sent him to Bath, and ordered him to abstain from all business; and when he derived no benefit from the waters they recommended him to travel in the south of France. The change appears to have had the desired effect, for he returned at the end of August 1768 with much improved health to take part in the debates on Indian affairs in Parliament.

The Government were urging the Company to renew the existing agreement under which £400,000 a year was paid to the Exchequer, and after some negotiation it was confirmed in a modified form for five years. Clive disapproved of the arrangement: he thought it an act of weakness on the part of the Company and of extortion on that of the Government; and he opposed it in the House of Commons, with the Directors, and in the Court of Proprietors. He was bitterly disappointed when, in spite of his efforts, it was approved by a majority of forty in the Court of Proprietors; and he withdrew in disgust to Bath. His health and temper were ill suited to the heated discussions that had been carried on, and he appears to have become despondent and to have seriously thought of retirement. To one friend he writes: "We are drawing very fast towards a dangerous crisis, from which we can only be extricated by some

first-rate genius, and where to find that genius does not appear at present." And to another: "I find myself very much disposed to withdraw myself from all public concerns whatever. My own happiness and that of my family is the only object I have in view, and that can only be obtained by retirement from the bustle and noise of a busy, debauched, and half-ruined nation."

In April 1769 Mr. Sulivan and his friends, who were strongly supported by Government, were brought into the Direction, and an important change of system followed. Mr. Vansittart, who had openly quarrelled with Clive and attached himself to Mr. Sulivan's party at the India House, was anxious to return to India as Governor-General. The appointment was opposed by Clive's friends, and as neither party was strong enough to carry its point, a compromise was effected, under which Mr. Vansittart, Colonel Forde, and Mr. Scrafton were sent out as supervisors to reorganise the Government of India. These gentlemen were lost at sea in the ill-fated *Aurora*, and, when their loss was known in England, Clive recommended that Warren Hastings, then a member of Council at Madras, should be appointed Governor of Bengal. The letter in which he congratulated the new governor is characteristic. After describing a plan for appointing several eminent men to the Council of Bengal, he says:

The situation of affairs requires that you should be very circumspect and active. . . . Be impartial and just to the public, regardless of the interest of individuals, where the honour of the nation and the real advantage of the Company are at stake, and resolute in carrying into execution your determination, which I hope will at all times be rather founded upon your own opinion than that of others. With

regard to political measures, they are to be taken according to the occasion. When danger arises every precaution must be made use of, but at the same time you must be prepared to meet and encounter it. This you must do with cheerfulness and confidence, never entertaining a thought of miscarrying till the misfortune actually happens, and even then you are not to despair, but be constantly contriving and carrying into execution schemes for retrieving affairs, always flattering yourself with an opinion that time and perseverance will get the better of everything. From the little knowledge I have of you, I am convinced that you have not only abilities and personal resolution but integrity and moderation with regard to riches; but I thought I discovered in you a diffidence in your own judgment and too great an easiness of disposition, which may subject you insensibly to be *led* where you ought to *guide*. Another evil which may arise from it is, that you may pay too great an attention to the reports of the natives, and be inclined to look upon things in the worst instead of the best light. A proper confidence in yourself and never-failing hope of success will be a bar to this and every other ill that your situation is liable too; and, as I am sure that you are not wanting in abilities for the great office of governor, I must add that an opportunity is now given you of making yourself one of the most distinguished characters of this country.

In the elections of 1770 and 1771 Mr. Sulivan and his party maintained their position, and this seems to have strengthened Clive's resolve to retire. "I am come," he writes, April 8th, 1771, "to the resolution of withdrawing myself entirely from India affairs, and spending the rest of my days in ease and retirement." He was, however, never to enjoy the repose to which he looked forward. Affairs in India had taken a most unfavourable turn; the available revenue had decreased, whilst the expenses had enormously increased, partly from an unfounded dread of the designs of the Nawab-

Vizier of Oude, and partly from an ill-conducted war with Hyder Ali in the Carnatic. Mr. Verelst retired from the Government in January 1770, and was succeeded by Mr. Cartier, whose feeble reign was marked by one of the most severe famines that have ever afflicted Bengal. It was computed that one-third of the inhabitants perished, and the revenues and trade were completely disorganised by the calamity. The extent of the bills drawn upon England was immensely increased, and it became doubtful whether the Company, far from being in a position to carry out its agreement with Government and pay a dividend of ten per cent, would be able to discharge its ordinary debts. The newspapers were filled with harrowing details of the sufferings of the Bengalis, and allusions to the man who had enriched himself at their expense. Clive was held responsible, not only for the blunders of men who violated all the rules of government he had laid down, but also for the failure of the heavens to give forth their rain.

On returning to England in 1767 his great wish had been to assist the Government to complete the work he had commenced. His serious illness prevented him from carrying out his design, and when he recovered it was abandoned. "I soon perceived," he wrote to Wedderburn, "that unless a settled administration, possessed of both resolution and power adequate to the object, undertook thoroughly to engage Parliament in the business, no material advantage could be gained for the nation by any light I could give." He continued, however, to take great interest in Indian affairs; wrote frequently to Verelst and his other friends in India;

and even when on the worst terms with Ministers and Directors he was always ready to give them the benefit of his experience. On November 13th, 1770, Clive suffered an irreparable loss in the death of George Grenville, who had always been his firm friend. Grenville was the only man to whose advice he listened, and it was he who, by his personal intervention, had terminated the disputes relating to the *jagir*. Clive was now cast adrift on the sea of politics. His Parliamentary influence was considerable, and if he had attached himself to either of the great political parties in the House all would have been well. But he could not identify himself with men whose policy he disapproved, or accommodate himself to the exigencies of party government; and he deliberately took up an isolated position at the head of a small party of his own. He thus incurred the hostility of Whigs and Tories, and left himself exposed without support to the attacks of his enemies. It was an unfortunate decision, and almost seems to indicate that his clearness of vision and wonted elasticity of mind were beginning to fail. He looked upon Chatham and Grenville as the only men who were capable of entertaining great ideas; and, in his despondency at their removal from the stage by illness and death, he could see no remedy for the anarchy and confusion that pervaded every part of the British Empire.

Parliament had hitherto paid little attention to the manner in which the East India Company governed its possessions in India. The weak administrations that had followed each other in rapid succession since the death of George the Second were too much occupied with their own quarrels, the riots in the country and the insurrec-

tionary movements in America, to study the politics of India. When they did interfere in matters of which they were profoundly ignorant, it was in an irresolute half-hearted manner. The financial difficulties of the Company brought on a crisis. The Ministry could no longer neglect Indian affairs, and arrangements were made for submitting a scheme for their future management to Parliament. In May, and again in October 1771, Government sought information and advice from Clive through his friend Wedderburn, who had become Solicitor-General. These proceedings could not be concealed from Clive's enemies in the India House, who, knowing they could not justify their own conduct, determined to attack him in his place in Parliament. On January 7th, 1772, a fortnight before Parliament met, Clive received an intimation from the Company's secretary that charges had been made against him in connection with his government of Bengal; and shortly afterwards the storm which had so long been gathering over his head broke.

On March 30th Mr. Sulivan brought in a Bill "for the better regulation of the affairs of the East India Company, and of their servants in India, and for the due administration of justice in Bengal." The speeches in support of the Bill were directly aimed at Clive, and he rose at once to reply. Whilst defending himself he carried the attack into the enemy's camp; and his speech was declared by Lord Chatham, who was present during the debate, to have been "one of the most finished pieces of eloquence he had ever heard in the House of Commons." It so effectually disposed of the charges made against his second government of Bengal

that the attacks of his enemies were afterwards confined to the earlier periods of his life. The speech, which was afterwards printed under Clive's direction, is one of singular power. Referring to his reforms in Bengal, he said :—

> The welfare of the Company required a vigorous exertion, and I took the resolution of cleansing the Augean stable. It was that conduct which has occasioned the public papers to teem with scurrility and abuse against me ever since my return to England. It was that conduct which occasioned those charges. It was that conduct which enables me now to lay my hand upon my heart, and most solemnly declare to this House, to the gallery, and to the whole world at large, that I never, in a single instance, lost sight of what I thought the honour and true interest of my country and the Company ; that I was never guilty of any acts of violence or oppression, unless the bringing offenders to justice can be deemed so ; that as to extortion, such an idea never entered into my mind ; that I did not suffer those under me to commit acts of violence, oppression, or extortion ; that my influence was never employed for the advantage of any man contrary to the strictest principles of honour and justice ; and that, so far from reaping any benefit myself from the expedition, I returned to England many thousand pounds out of pocket.

To the charge that he had created a monopoly of cotton he replied : "Trade was not my profession. My line has been military and political. I owe all I have in the world to my having been at the head of an army ; and as to cotton, I know no more about it than the Pope of Rome." To another charge that his establishment of a monopoly of salt, betel-nut, and tobacco had caused the late famine, he replied : "How a monopoly of salt, betel-nut, and tobacco, in the years of 1765 and 1766, could occasion a want of rain and scarcity of rice in the year

1770 is past my comprehension. I confess I cannot answer that part of this article; and as to the *other commodities*, as they have not been specified, I cannot say anything to them." He proved, by official returns, that, since the acceptance of the *diwani*, the revenue had but slightly decreased, while the expenses had increased each year, until they promised to leave a deficit instead of a surplus. He attributed the disorganised state of the Company's affairs to "a relaxation of government in his successors; great neglect on the part of His Majesty's administration; notorious misconduct on the part of the Directors; and the violent and outrageous proceedings of General Courts, including contested elections." The Ministry, instead of turning their attention to the acquisition by the country of a kingdom with a revenue of four millions, thought of nothing but the present time, regardless of the future; they said, "Let us get what we can to-day; let to-morrow take care of itself." They thought of nothing but the immediate division of the loaves and fishes; nay, so anxious were they to lay their hands upon some immediate advantage, that they actually went so far as to influence a parcel of temporary proprietors to bully the Directors into their terms. It was their duty to have called upon the Directors for a plan; and if a plan in consequence had not been laid before them, it would then have become their duty, with the aid and assistance of Parliament, to have formed one themselves. He censured in the strongest and most unguarded terms the Directors, and every individual and party connected with the management of Indian affairs. He declared that the Court of Pro-

prietors, in passing a motion of indemnity to the accused members of Council, had led their servants abroad to look upon all covenants as so many sheets of blank paper; and that the Directors had restored nearly every civil and military transgressor who had been dismissed. "And now," he continued, "as a condemnation of their own conduct, and a tacit confession of their own weakness, they come to Parliament with a Bill of regulations, in which is inserted a clause to put such practices as much as possible out of their power for the future."

Clive was followed by Governor Johnston, brother of the Mr. Johnston who had accepted money from Meer Jaffier's successor, who, in a speech of great violence, declared that all the evils that had arisen were the natural result of Clive's action when governor. Leave having been given to introduce the Bill, it was brought in by Mr. Sulivan, on April 13th, and on this occasion Colonel Burgoyne moved that "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the nature, state, and condition of the East India Company, and of the British affairs in the East Indies." The motion was carried without a division, and a Committee was appointed with Burgoyne as chairman. When the Committee met, Burgoyne had no plan; but this was supplied by Governor Johnston, and it soon became evident that the inquiry would be pointedly directed against Clive. It was not concluded when the House rose, and was continued in the following session.

During the recess Clive was installed as a Knight of the Bath, and was appointed Lord-Lieutenant of the county of Shropshire; and, in the following December,

Lord-Lieutenant of Montgomeryshire. He was irritated with the Ministry, who had shown no inclination to take Indian affairs into their own hands; and who, if they had not actually encouraged, had shown no disapprobation of the personal manner in which the proceedings of the Committee had been conducted. This, however, did not prevent him from submitting an able paper on the whole system of Indian Government at home and abroad to Lord North. "I will not patiently stand by," he wrote to Mr. Strachey, "and see a great Empire, acquired by great abilities, perseverance, and resolution, lost by ignorance and indolence. If administration should think proper to see our affairs abroad in the same light as I do, *'tis well.* If not, I shall have done my duty. . . . Private letters from India give a most dreadful account of the luxury, dissipation, and extravagance of Bengal." Meanwhile the Company were obliged to borrow money from the Bank, and to apply to Government for a loan. They were referred to Parliament, and when it reassembled, in November 1772, Lord North, seeing that the Select Committee had directed its inquiries to charges of a personal nature, "moved that a Committee of Secrecy be appointed to inquire into the state of the East India Company." The two Committees sat at the same time; and the returns and documents laid before them were compiled in the India Office under influences hostile to Clive and his interests. Grave errors of fact, such as the statement that Clive received his *jagir* at the time of the revolution in favour of Meer Jaffier, were published; and false charges of suppressing important documents were made. An unfavourable impression was thus produced which it was difficult to counteract and destroy.

On May 10th, 1773, the charges against Clive came before the House in a definite form. Burgoyne, as Chairman of Committee, moved "1. That all acquisitions made under the influence of a military force, or by treaty with foreign princes, do of right belong to the State. 2. That to appropriate acquisitions so made to the private emolument of persons entrusted with any civil or military power of the State is illegal. 3. That very great sums of money and other valuable property have been acquired in Bengal, from princes and others of that country, by persons entrusted with the military and civil powers of the State, by means of such powers, which sums of money and valuable property have been appropriated to the private use of such persons." In moving his resolutions Burgoyne intimated that if they were carried he would follow them up with vigour. Clive, who was attacked by Thurlow the Attorney General, and defended by Wedderburn the Solicitor-General, made a speech full of force and dignity. The resolutions were carried; and, on May 17th, Burgoyne gave effect to them by moving "That it appears to this House, that the Right Honourable Lord Clive, Baron of Plassey in the Kingdom of Ireland, about the time of the deposition of Surajah Dowlah and the establishment of Meer Jaffier on the *musnud*, through the influence of the powers with which he was entrusted as a member of the Select Committee and Commander-in-Chief of the British forces, did obtain and possess himself of two lacs of rupees as Commander-in-Chief, a further sum of two lacs and eighty thousand rupees as member of the Select Committee, and a further sum of sixteen lacs or more under the denomination of private

donation; which sums, amounting together to twenty lacs and eighty thousand rupees, were of the value in English money of £234,000; and that, in so doing, the said Robert Lord Clive abused the power with which he was entrusted, to the evil example of the servants of the public, and to the dishonour and detriment of the State."

Clive made a long defence of his conduct, in the course of which he attacked the Directors, the Ministry, and Lord North, and complained of the malignity of his enemies.

I have (he said) served my country and the Company faithfully; and had it been my fortune to be employed by the Crown, I should not have been in the situation I am in at present. . . . Sir, not a stone has been left unturned where the least probability could arise of discovering something of a criminal nature against me. The two Committees, sir, seem to have bent the whole of their inquiries to the conduct of their humble servant, the Baron of Plassey, and I have been examined by the Select Committee more like a sheep-stealer than a member of this House. I am sure, sir, if I had any sore places about me, they would have been found; they have probed to the bottom: no lenient plasters have been applied to heal. No, sir, they were all of the blister kind, prepared with Spanish flies and other provocations. The public records have been ransacked for proofs against me. . . . As for punishments, which have been spoken of as necessary, I have a plan to propose which I think may be of great use. The three Jacobite heads which were lately upon Temple Bar have tumbled down, but the poles remain; and as there is no probability of the heads being replaced, for Jacobitism seems at an end (at least some people have strangely altered their opinions of late years), there can be no further occasion for them on that score. Now I would propose that heads of the three East Indians be stuck up in their stead, *in terrorem*, and that my head,

by way of pre-eminence, be put in the middle; and as His Majesty has given me a title to supporters, I cannot pitch on more proper ones than the heads of the late Chairman and Deputy to be placed one on each side, on the other two poles. (In concluding, he observed), My enemies may take from me what I have; they may, as they think, make me poor, but I will be happy! I mean not this as my defence, though I have done for the present. My defence will be heard at that bar; but before I sit down, I have one request to make to the House,—that, when they come to decide upon my honour, they will not forget their own.

During the long and heated debate that followed Lord North spoke in favour of the words of censure on Clive. The Attorney-General attacked, the Solicitor-General defended. The courtiers went different ways. A majority of the Opposition supported Clive. Eventually the House resolved that Clive, as Commander-in-Chief, had received large sums of money from Meer Jaffier, but, when it was asked to affirm "That Lord Clive did, in so doing, abuse the powers with which he was entrusted, to the evil example of the servants of the public," the motion was rejected without a division. At last, about five in the morning, Wedderburn moved "That Robert Lord Clive did at the same time render great and meritorious services to his country," and his motion was carried unanimously.

Clive was now secure in the enjoyment of his wealth and honours. He was happy in his family and surrounded by warm friends. His reputation as a soldier and statesman was high. His political influence was considerable, and he was still in the prime of life. While the inquiry and debates were proceeding he had displayed the greatest firmness, challenging the most

minute investigation of his conduct, concealing nothing, avowing everything, and even boasting of what he had done. Neither the efforts of his enemies nor the combined attack upon him in Parliament could daunt his courage. But the strain had been too great for his shattered constitution. When the excitement of combat was over the fits of depression from which he had suffered through life returned with increasing frequency. He could not forget the manner in which he had been treated while under examination by the Committee. It was not sufficient to have been acquitted and applauded; he brooded over the indignity of having been accused. There were moments when his friends hoped that his gloom might be dispersed, and Ministers appear to have wished to avail themselves of his services in America. But it was not to be. On November 22nd, 1774, in a moment of feverish irritability induced by intense physical suffering, he died by his own hand. He had just completed his forty-ninth year.

CHAPTER XI

CLIVE'S POLICY AND CHARACTER

In considering Clive's Indian career it is very necessary to remember the condition of India and the political state of Europe and England at the time; and also to draw a broad distinction between his views on the government of India and the policy which, from motives of necessity or expediency, he actually carried out.

The rise of British power in India was due to unforeseen occurrences rather than to adherence to any fixed line of policy; and it is the story of a decade—from Plassey in 1757 to Clive's final departure from India in 1767. Before Plassey the English in Bengal were merchants influenced by purely commercial principles, and taking no interest in the native government of the country, except as it affected trade. The credit of a good bargain was the utmost scope of their ambition. After Plassey the changes were so rapid and so bewildering that neither the English in India nor the Directors at home realised the position into which they had been forced by success. While still merchants they had become masters of a country as large as a European State, and they ruled it as if immediate gain were the first principle of government. The civil servants of the

Company, intoxicated by their sudden rise to wealth and power, displayed a domineering, grasping spirit in their dealings with the natives, which produced the worst results. The Directors, unable to rise above the level of merchants, refused to pay their servants adequate salaries, and left them to derive their incomes from commerce carried on through native agents and their greedy army of retainers. In a short time India teemed "with iniquities so rank as to smell to earth and heaven;" and years elapsed before the principle was acknowledged that a Government which receives a large revenue is bound, in common justice and humanity, to protect the people who pay it.

The condition of India at the time enabled the English to establish themselves in Bengal with ease. Persian and Afghan invasions and Mahratta raids had given a death-blow to the Mogul Empire and exhausted the country. The native princes who had risen to power during the decline of the monarchy were too much engaged in asserting their rights to the territories they had seized to think of combination; their treasuries were empty, and the raw, ill-paid levies which constituted their armies were of little use when opposed to disciplined troops. At one time it seemed doubtful whether the English or the Mahrattas were to inherit the Empire of the Moguls, but the question was settled in favour of the former in 1761, when the Mahrattas were defeated by the Afghans on the field of Paniput.

Clive was one of the few men who grasped the situation and looked beyond the present. His views on Indian affairs, examined by the light of present experience, may not seem perfect, but they contain more political and

practical foresight than those of any of his contemporaries, and many of them were afterwards adopted. During his second administration he displayed great powers of organisation; and, in the words of Burke, "the plan which he laid down, and the course which he pursued, were in general great and well imagined. He settled great foundations if they had been adhered to."

At an early period Clive had formed a comprehensive scheme for assuming the sovereignty of Bengal, and gradually extending British rule as opportunity afforded; and it was only when he was brought into contact with the flagrant corruption in the civil and military services, during his second administration, that he abandoned the project as impracticable. He had a very low opinion of the administrative capacity of the Directors, and considered the charters granted to a company of merchants quite unsuited to the government of an Empire. He also believed that if the rights of the Company to territorial possessions were closely examined they would be disputed, and the Crown become the possessor. When Chatham was Secretary of State Clive was most anxious that the Crown should take the government of India under its direct control. But on Lord Bute's accession to office he modified his views, and during the administrative anarchy that followed the illness of Chatham he seems to have come to the conclusion that a Ministry which could not govern the colonies was little fitted to rule India. He still considered that the interests of the Company and of the nation were inseparable; and, to secure those of the latter, he proposed that the constitution of the Company should be altered so as to admit of the appointment of two Directors by the Crown. He

also suggested that the Directors should be appointed for a term of years, and not changed annually; and that business should be dealt with in Committees instead of being brought before the whole Court.

Clive was strongly in favour of placing the British possessions in India under one head, and of making Calcutta the principal seat of Government. His view was, that the Governor-General should be assisted by a Council of five with adequate salaries, instead of by a Council of sixteen equals with none; and that he should be authorised to issue orders to Bombay and Madras, and act in emergencies against the opinion of his Council. All the members of the civil service should be well paid and forbidden to trade, and their salaries should be defrayed out of the revenue. The army was to be large enough to defend the Bengal provinces, and any unnecessary increase of it was to be avoided on account of the heavy expense. The European troops were to be formed into regiments and divided into brigades, and depot battalions in England were to provide a steady supply of recruits. Suitable provision was to be made for invalids and widows, and Clive's noble gift of £70,000 enabled the Company to constitute a fund for this purpose which was always known by the name of its founder.[1] The native army may almost be looked upon as the creation of Clive, and his opinion with regard to the treatment of sepoys and the supposed danger of employing them are of great interest. "There is one step," he writes to Colonel Smith, "to be taken with regard to the sepoys, which, I think,

[1] On the transfer of British India to the Crown in 1858, Meer Jaffier's legacy was claimed by the heirs of Lord Clive and passed into their hands.

will bring them to the greatest perfection sepoys can be brought to, viz. the officers commanding the sepoys to run in that corps only, by which means all the officers will understand the language, without which it is impossible to bring the sepoys to that pitch of discipline which will make them truly formidable." In another letter he says: "I am of opinion that so long as they are regularly paid, treated with humanity, and not flattered with promises never meant to be performed, no danger is to be apprehended. . . . Their attachment is strong, but they know no other than to those who feed and clothe them." He states that, to avoid the danger of a general revolution, he had divided the sepoys into three brigades; and adds that the best additional security he could think of was to have an equal number of Hindus and Moslems in each battalion, and "to encourage a rivalry of discipline between them."

Clive's native policy was to govern India by the natives of India, to do no harm, and to leave things as they were until the English gained experience and saw their way clearly. He wished to retain the system he found, to change native institutions as little as possible, and to allow the natives to have the entire management of their own concerns. The English were to hold the reins of government, to keep in their own hands the controlling and directing power and the command of the military forces, and to exercise a general supervision. They were not to be employed as minor officials in the courts of justice or other branches of the administration. All such posts were to be filled by natives. He contended that "the attempt to introduce the English laws throughout our possessions in India would be absurd

and impracticable;" and suggested that an attorney-general and several good lawyers should be sent out to remodel the courts of justice, and frame laws for the settlements. Taxes were only to be increased with the greatest caution: all those which were burdensome to the cultivator were to be avoided, however productive they might be; and no duties were to be levied on the necessaries of life. The internal trade was to be left to the natives: the upper classes of natives were to be maintained in easy opulence; and leases of land were to be granted for the protection of the *ryot*.

Clive wished, as we have seen, gradually to extend British rule in India; but, on reaching Calcutta in 1765, he came to the conclusion that it would be better to stop the career of conquest and put an end to the ruinous cost of the army in the field. His immediate programme was to hold the three provinces, which, under good government, would yield a large surplus revenue; to erect Oude into a "buffer" state; to undertake no offensive wars; to avoid all complications with neighbouring native princes; and to delay the inevitable advance until the British power was consolidated. He believed that the Bengal provinces could be defended by a small army, and that, by carefully watching the movements of the native princes, the English could hold the balance of power in India and nip any combination in the bud. The only enemy he feared was the French, for with singular prescience he looked forward to the time when, after assisting the American colonies to establish their independence, they would renew their designs on India. Two years after Plassey, and again in 1765, Clive was strongly urged by Shah Alum to

restore him to the throne of his ancestors. The scheme was a tempting one to an ambitious man, and Clive knew that it was practicable. But he saw that the time had not arrived for the establishment of an Anglo-Indian Empire, and that a premature advance would be contrary to sound policy and the interests of England. He had the greatness of mind to resist the temptation and to content himself with the less brilliant but more solid achievement of rendering the British hold on the Bengal provinces secure. No one who reads the history of the period can avoid the conclusion that Clive was right. Success would have been followed by evil rather than good. All the horrors that flowed from government on commercial principles in Bengal would have been multiplied tenfold, and the fate of India would have been that of Mexico or Peru. The Parliamentary inquiry into Clive's conduct and the impeachment of Warren Hastings had to take place before the Indian civil service could be purified, and the English be fitted to rule an Indian Empire.

Clive's action as a public man in England appears to have been largely influenced by two motives: a desire to enforce his views with regard to the government of India, and the necessity for protecting his fortune. When he returned in 1760 he proposed to ignore the India House and to carry his views over the heads of the Directors through his influence with the Ministry and the Court. His illness and the resignation of Pitt interfered with this scheme; and, after he had rejected Lord Bute's overtures, he was almost obliged, in self-defence, to embark on the stormy sea of Leadenhall Street politics. It was neither a wise nor a dignified course

to pursue, and Clive was gradually sinking into the position of leader of a party at the India House when the course of events in India restored him to his proper sphere. If it had not been for his unfortunate illness, the transfer of India to the Crown might possibly have taken place while Chatham was in power; and if, after Chatham's fall, he had supported Lord Bute, he would probably have been able to control the destinies of India. It was not, however, in the nature of the man to be inconsistent, and he sacrificed the object he had most at heart sooner than abandon his political friends.

During the first ten years of George the Third's reign the "Nabob" had become a prominent and very unpopular figure in Parliament and the country. The strength of the prejudice against the Nabobs may be gathered from one of Lord Chatham's speeches. "For some years past," he says, "there has been an influx of wealth into this country which has been attended by many fatal consequences, because it has not been the regular natural produce of labour and industry. The riches of Asia have been poured in upon us, and have brought with them not only Asiatic luxury, but, I fear, Asiatic principles of government. Without connections, without any natural interest in the soil, the importers of foreign gold have forced their way into Parliament by such a torrent of private corruption as no private hereditary fortune could resist." Clive, as the most distinguished and most wealthy of the class, was regarded as the personification of their vices; and, when the Parliamentary inquiry disclosed the misgovernment of Bengal, he was singled out as the political scapegoat to bear the sins of every one who had oppressed or

defrauded a native in India. He defended himself in his place in Parliament and before the committees of inquiry with marked ability and courage; and Burke always maintained that the purity of his second administration atoned for the faults and crimes he had committed at an earlier period of his career. One of the most complete vindications of Clive's conduct comes from the pen of a historian who has taken an unfavourable view of his character. In summing up the Parliamentary proceedings, Mill says:—

> The considerations which fairly recommended the rejection, or at least a very great modification of the penal proceeding, were not so much as mentioned; that the punishment threatened was more grievous than the offence: that it was punishment by an *ex-post-facto* law, because, however contrary to the principles of right government the presents received from Meer Jaffier, and however odious to the moral sense the deception practised upon Omichund, there was no law at the time which forbade them; that the presents, how contrary soever to European morals and ideas, were perfectly correspondent to those of the country in which they were received, and to the expectations of the parties by whom they were bestowed; that the treachery to Omichund was countenanced and palliated by some of the principles and many of the admired incidents of European diplomacy; that Clive, though never inattentive to his own interests, was actuated by a sincere desire to promote the prosperity of the Company, and appears not in any instance to have sacrificed what he regarded as their interests to his own; and that it would have required an extraordinary man, which no one ought to be punished for not being, to have acted, in that most trying situation in which he was placed, with greater disinterestedness than he displayed. (*Hist. of Brit. India*, iii. 511.)

In politics Clive was a moderate Whig, and a steady adherent of George Grenville. Accustomed to the exer-

cise of absolute authority, he was little fitted to take part in the intrigues of party; and, except when Indian affairs were under discussion, he rarely addressed the House. When he did rise, his speeches were full of matter, closely argumentative, manly, and energetic.

The extent and variety of Clive's work in India are remarkable. Few men, with the notable exception of Napoleon, have accomplished so much in such a brief space of time, or have displayed greater capacity for civil and military administration. All the measures of his government were his own; and in enforcing their adoption he was not only resolute but stern. All opposition was contemptuously swept aside: no allowance was made for the weakness or indecision of subordinates; and every one who did not act up to his high sense of duty was openly censured in the severest terms. In selecting men for important duties he showed great discrimination. He possessed the happy faculty of distinguishing men of merit, and had the good sense to employ them even when, as in the case of Colonel Richard Smith, he personally disliked them. Rennell, a young subaltern of engineers, was made Surveyor-General, and encouraged to carry out a survey of the Bengal provinces; Gladwin was introduced into the service to become the first on a long roll of oriental scholars; Warren Hastings, who was to preserve and extend the Indian Empire, was selected for political work; and men who had acquired a knowledge of the language, habits, and customs of the people received rapid advancement. One of the few instances in which his judgment seems to have been at fault is that of the distinguished soldier Sir Eyre Coote, whom he believed to

be mercenary, given to intrigue, and unfit for high command. When a man had once won Clive's confidence it was rarely withdrawn; and he advocated the claims to advancement of those who assisted him in his onerous duties with the greatest boldness and pertinacity. He was entirely free from petty jealousy and meanness; and was not one of those men who, when their plans fail, seek to excuse themselves at the expense of a subordinate. All that he did or said, whether in praise or blame, was open and straightforward. He was ever ready to take upon himself the whole responsibility in military and civil affairs, and always acted in the spirit in which he wrote to Carnac, "If there be anything which can occasion you the least uneasiness, for God's sake let the whole weight fall upon my shoulders."

All Clive's minutes and official letters are written with great force and clearness. They are sometimes egotistical, sometimes boastful, and there is a tendency to exaggerate when an object has to be gained; but they are manly in tone, go straight to the point, and never leave the reader in the least doubt as to their meaning. Praise is given ungrudgingly where praise is due, and censures are conveyed in the strongest language. His private letters to his friends are written in the formal style of the period. They are always kind, always thoughtful, but there is occasionally an unpleasant tone of superiority and a marked deficiency of feeling. His home letters, though wanting in warmth, are written in affectionate terms, and contain many references to the scenes of his early boyhood and to his numerous relations, which show that he was strongly attached to his home and family.

Clive lived on the best of terms with the Governors of the European settlements; and his countrymen in Bengal placed implicit confidence in his honour and judgment. He won the respect and affection of the natives by his uniform consideration for their feelings, and so long as he ruled Bengal they lived in ease and security. Complaints there certainly were, but they came from Englishmen whose tyranny had been restrained, and not from natives who had been oppressed. He had an intimate knowledge of the character of the natives,[1] and, to increase his consequence in their eyes, he accepted patents of nobility from the Padishah, and had his native title, Sabut Jung, engraved on his Persian seal. The awe with which he was regarded is amusingly illustrated by a story told by a native historian. Meer Jaffier, on a certain occasion, blamed one of his nobles, whose followers had engaged in a brawl with some of the Company's sepoys. "Are you yet to learn," he said, "who that Colonel Clive is, and in what station God has placed him?" "I," replied the chief, "I quarrel with the Colonel! I who never get up in the morning without making three profound bows to his jackass! How could I be bold enough after that to fall out with his rider?"

Clive never allowed his private interests to influence his conduct of public affairs. Although he felt no scruples about enriching himself when the public did not ostensibly suffer, his policy was never dictated by the hope of personal gain. After Plassey he had ample opportunities of adding to his wealth, but, excepting the

[1] He is said to have had a very slight acquaintance with the languages of the country.

jagir, he accepted nothing. His expenditure in India was on a lavish scale, his hospitality was unbounded, he betted freely at cards and in the cockpit, his horses and equipages were of the very best, and amongst his orders for dress is one for "two hundred shirts, the wristbands worked, some of the ruffles worked with a border either in squares or points, and the rest plain; stocks, neckcloths, and handkerchiefs in proportion; three *corse* (sixty pairs) of stockings; several pieces of plain and spotted muslin, etc. . . ." Directly he took the field he adopted the simple habits of a soldier; he was constantly on horseback, carried little baggage, lived on the plainest fare, was always in uniform, and shared in all the hardships of his soldiers. The contrast between his habits and those of De Bussy was striking.

M. de Bussy (writes the native historian) always wore embroidered clothes, or brocade, with an embroidered hat; and, in days of ceremony, embroidered shoes of black velvet. He was seen in an immense tent, full sufficient for six hundred men, of about thirty feet in elevation; at one end of this tent he sat on an arm-chair embroidered with the King's arms, placed upon an elevation, which last was covered by a crimson carpet of embroidered velvet; at his right, but upon back chairs only, sat a dozen of his officers. Over against him his French guard on horseback, and behind these his Turkish guards; his table, always in plate, was served with three, often with four services. To this French magnificence he added all the parade and pageant of Hindustani manners and customs, a numerous set of tents, a *pishkhana;* always on an elephant himself as were all his officers. He was preceded by *chopdars* on horseback, and by a set of musicians, singing his feats of chivalry, with always two head-*chopdars* reciting his eulogium. Colonel Clive always wore his regimentals in the field, was always on horseback, and never rode in a

palanquin; he had a plentiful table, but no ways delicate, and never more than two services. He used to march mostly at the head of the column, with his aides-de-camp, or was hunting at the right and left. He never wore silks but in town.

In England Clive lived in a style of great sple. . He was enormously rich, and purchased estates in different parts of the country to increase his Parliamentary interest. At Walcot Sir Thomas Chambers built him a noble mansion; and extensive improvements were carried out at Claremont, and at the old family seat at Styche. At Bath he bought the lease of Lord Chatham's house, and his town residence in Berkeley Square was fitted up in a style of oriental magnificence. His carriages, horses, and footmen eclipsed those of the nobility; his dress was extravagantly rich; his hospitality was ostentatious; and in everything he sought to indulge his passion for display. He was at one time in great favour at Court. The Queen was godmother to one of his children, and the King was pleased to accept from him an elephant and other animals which he had procured from India. At a later period George the Third seems to have listened to the popular clamour against him, and the honour of an English peerage, which he had always coveted, was never granted. Of other honours he had his full share; his statue was placed in the India Office with those of Lawrence and Pocock; a special medal, to commemorate Plassey and its results, was struck in his honour by the Society for Promoting Arts and Sciences. He was Lord-Lieutenant of two counties, a Major-General in India, M.P. for Shrewsbury, a Fellow of the Royal Society, and a Doctor of

Laws. Voltaire at one time thought of writing a history of his career in India, and asked for the necessary documents, but for some reason the idea was abandoned. And his friend Orme made him the central figure in his history of the struggle between the English and French supremacy in India.

In his domestic and family relations Clive was singularly happy. He was married to a lady of great beauty and accomplishments, to whom he was sincerely attached, and to her constant care much of the comfort and happiness of his life was due. His sincere love and regard for his parents and family is one of the most pleasing traits in his character. He delighted in sharing his wealth with them, and during the busiest periods of his life he was constantly giving them fresh proofs of his love and attachment. His father and mother were given sufficient to enable them to live in comfort and independence, and he was equally liberal in his gifts to his wife's relations. His elevation to high rank made no difference in his relations with friends and family, and he never forgot those who had assisted him in his career.

Clive was one of the most liberal and generous of men, and his gifts were made in such a manner as to enhance their value. He marked his gratitude to Stringer Lawrence by settling £500 a year upon him for life; he promised to leave £500 a year to his friend General Carnac if he retired; and he presented Mr. Wedderburn, afterwards Lord Loughborough, with a house and grounds in Surrey, that he might have a pleasant neighbour when living at Claremont. Always kind and considerate to those in distress, he gave large sums of money to the French officers who were prisoners in India, and in 1766

he assisted several of the mutinous officers, who were in pecuniary difficulties, to return to England after their dismissal. He considered that every one connected with him was entitled to share in his good fortune, and it is computed that he gave away one-sixth of his wealth to his relations and friends. His noble gift of Meer Jaffier's legacy to the hospital at Poplar enabled provision to be made for the worn-out soldiers of the Company.

Clive, whose character was rapidly developed in the rude school of war, soon gained an ascendency over all around him, and raised himself early in life, by sheer force of talent, to a foremost place in the nation. He gives the impression of a man who had set before himself a high ideal, and who acted up to it according to his lights; a man of indomitable courage, iron determination, and extraordinary energy, who pursued the immediate object in view with undoubting confidence and unflinching resolution. He possessed a well-balanced mind, which was never led astray by the promptings of ambition or the intoxication of success; and a warm temper, apt to provoke hostility and quick to take offence, which was always kept under the most perfect control. He may have committed errors, he may sometimes have been mistaken in his policy, but he was animated by a high sense of honour and duty, and by a passionate love of England. In all that he did he was honest, sincere, and straightforward, and because he was so, he was hated and misunderstood. Even in the most questionable action of his life, the fabrication of the fictitious treaty to deceive Omichund, he attempted no concealment. The fact was recorded

in the minutes of the Select Committee, and he openly justified himself afterwards on the plea of necessity.

As a statesman Clive showed sound judgment in attempting only what was practicable. His reforms [illegible] temporary expedients, calculated to give peace and s[illegible] to the Empire he had won. Beyond this he did not g[illegible], although his views as to the importance of India, and the policy that should be pursued, were clear. Cool in deliberation, vehement in action, he was able, by his great powers of work and close application to business, to rule Bengal almost single-handed, and to achieve what most men would have deemed the impossible. As a soldier he was beloved by his men, a "spoiled child of victory" in the field, an able administrator in peace. Although he was never opposed to a European commander of the calibre of De Bussy, his successes are astonishing when the means and material which he had at his disposal are taken into consideration. He was equally successful when opposed to the French and their native allies and when face to face with a mutiny amongst the men he had led to victory.

There was little refinement in Clive's manner. At times stern and imperious, at times stubborn and dogged, he was blunt and outspoken even to rudeness; and he frequently gave great offence by his impatience of opposition, and his openly expressed contempt for mediocrity. He loved praise, and was very susceptible to flattery; while detraction at once roused all his combative faculties. Those who agreed with him were lauded to the skies; while those who differed from him were roundly abused, even when they happened to be old friends like Mr. Sumner and Mr. Vansittart. "His

person," we are told, "was of the largest of the middle size, his countenance inclined to sadness, and the heaviness of his brow imparted an unpleasing expression to his features." Although silent and reserved in society, when the conversation turned upon a subject in which he was interested, he would rouse himself and take part in it with the greatest animation; while among his intimates he could be pleasant and merry enough. The prejudice created against him by the incredible stories of the atrocities and crimes he was said to have committed in India was undoubtedly increased by the peculiarity of his manner. Afflicted with a painful disease, which was aggravated by the opium taken to alleviate it, and subject to periods of nervous depression, he would sit for hours in moody silence, as if there were some heavy load on his mind which he could not shake off. Yet he has never been accused of a single act of cruelty. Few men have had every action of their lives submitted to such close and hostile scrutiny, and none has passed more triumphantly through the trying ordeal. If, on the one hand, we have reason to regret that, on one occasion, a man so great should have stooped so low, we have, on the other, abundant cause to be thankful that Clive was not a Cortez or a Pizarro, and that he was not sufficiently modernised to pledge English honour and break it without the slightest compunction.

Clive's career in India is divided into three periods. During the first, in the full freshness of his youth, his honour and good faith are beyond question. Filled with a noble ardour for the glory of his country, the welfare of the Company, and the humiliation of the

French, he dared everything, and, chaining victory to his standards, saved the British settlements from destruction. In the second period he studied the interests of the Company without neglecting his own; and, while giving an Empire to England, sullied his fair fame by an act of treachery which is without excuse. During the third, in his mature manhood, he manifested a sincere desire to reform abuses, and rendered services of transcendent value to his country by consolidating the Empire he had won. In England, during his lifetime, the hero of Arcot was welcomed with applause: the victor of Plassey was an object of envy and jealousy; and the reformer of the civil and military services in Bengal was held up to public execration. Among the many illustrious men India has produced none is greater than the first of her soldier-statesmen, whose successful career marks an era in the history of England and of the world. Great in council, great in war, great in his exploits, which were many, and great in his faults, which were few, Clive will ever be remembered as the man who laid deeply the foundations of our Indian Empire, and who in a time of national despondency restored the tarnished honour of the British arms.

THE END

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